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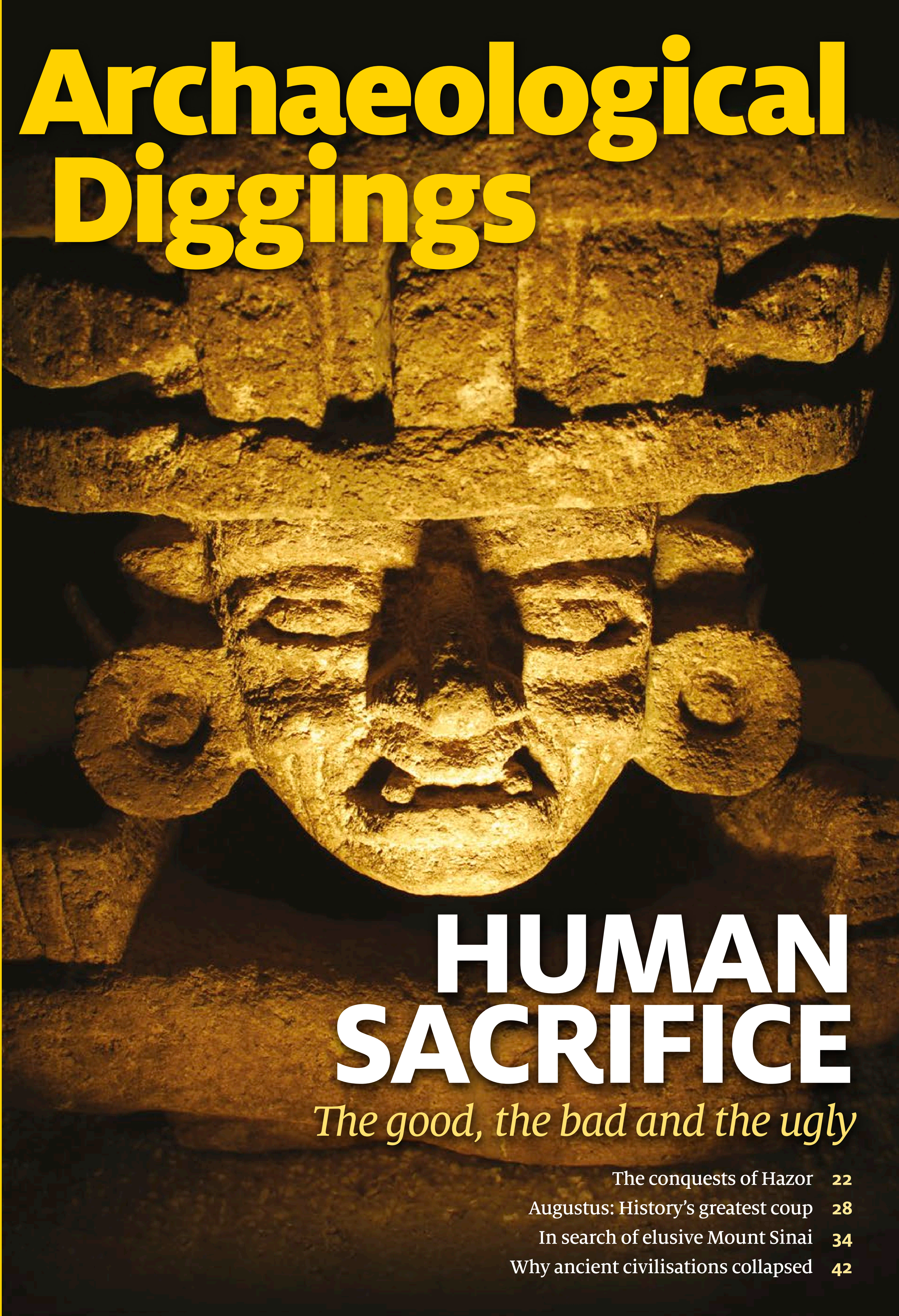
Archaeological Diggings



HUMAN SACRIFICE

The good, the bad and the ugly

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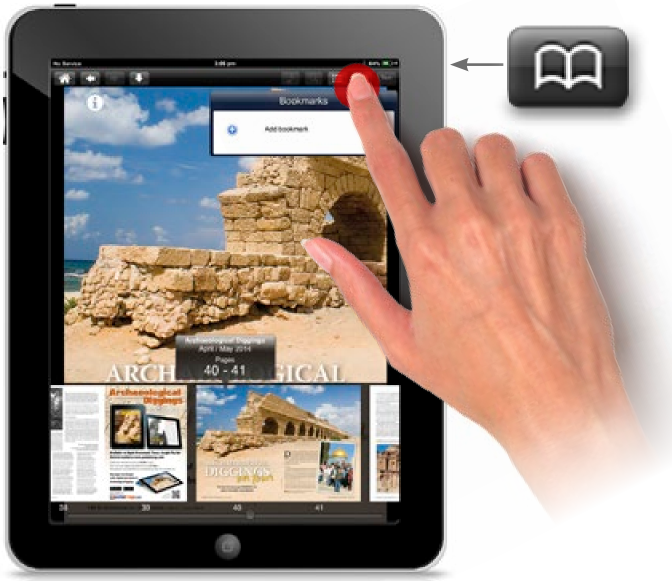
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IN SEARCH OF THE REAL

SINAI

Throughout history, many mountain sites have been identified as the authentic Mount Sinai of the Bible. **Matthew Williams** takes a look at the academic evidence for three of the most popular locations.

STEPS OF PENITENCE. Hikers descending Jebel Musa, the traditional Mount Sinai, following one of two primary routes. The mountain, associated with Moses and the Ten Commandments, is a popular destination for religious and secular visitors alike, but is it the real Mount Sinai?

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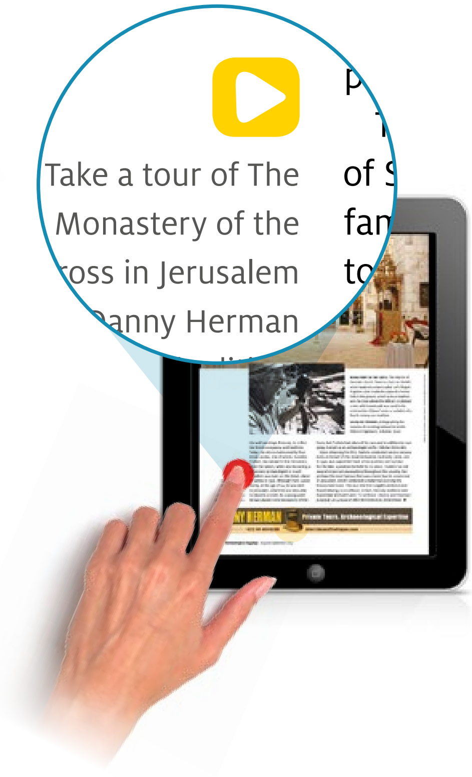

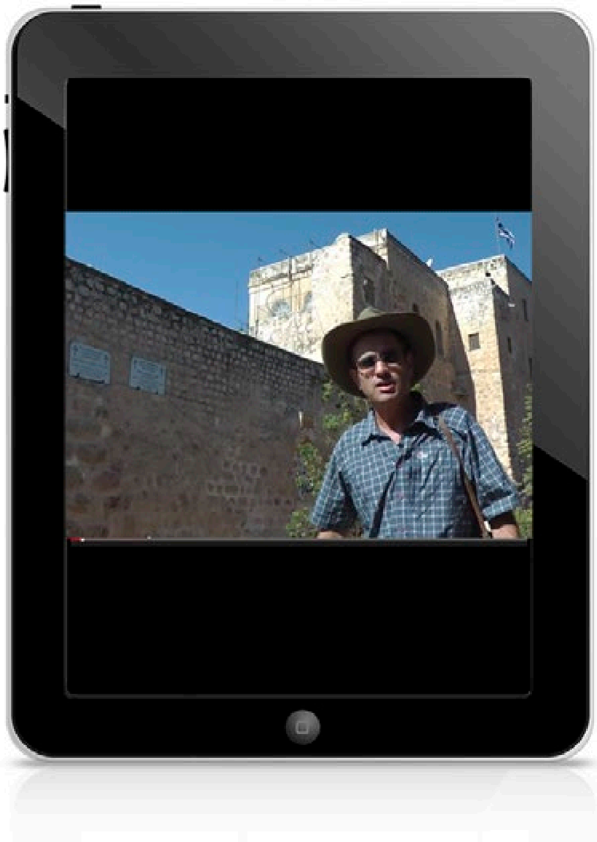

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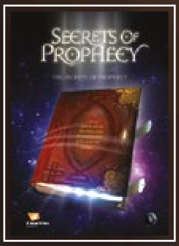

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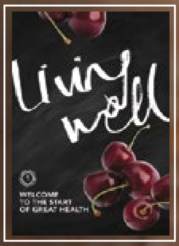

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ON THE COVER: The Aztec fire god, Huehueteotl, from Teotihuacan. Huehueteotl's human victims were first thrown into a fire, then pulled out with hooks while still alive. The beating heart was then removed and thrown back into the fire (see story on page 14).

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New beginnings

MOST PEOPLE LIKE NEW THINGS—A NEW HOUSE, A new car, a new job, even a new year. Well, we here at DIGGINGS like new things too. No doubt you will have noticed over the past few months quite a few new things about your DIGGINGS magazine. And with this issue, we have refurbished the print version thanks to our incredibly creative design team. But there's more. We also have some new contributors to our magazine. Dr Titus Kennedy, an archaeologist in the US, joins us with a very interesting article on the famous ancient site of Hazor, in Israel. Matthew Williams, a PhD student at Macquarie University in Sydney, also writes for us for the first time about Sinai. For years, pilgrims and students of history have trekked to the Sinai Penninsula to climb the traditional Mount Sinai or other possible Mount Sinai sites. Recently, considerable attention has been devoted to a location in Saudi Arabia that has some interesting archaeological and geophysical features that suggest it as an alternative location. You will enjoy Matthew's article, "In Search of the Real Sinai" (page 34). Finally we begin a new series by regular and long-time contributor, Daryn Graham. You will enjoy his "Emperors of Rome" series, which begins with Caesar Augustus, who died 2000 years ago.

We will miss some things we have enjoyed in the past. One of those will be the stimulating articles written by Michael Caba from the US. Michael has commenced a PhD program and we wish him well as he digs deeper into the books. His article is a must-read, a thought-provoking look at the history of human sacrifice. But he hasn't gone forever; thankfully, Michael has also promised to return to DIGGINGS.

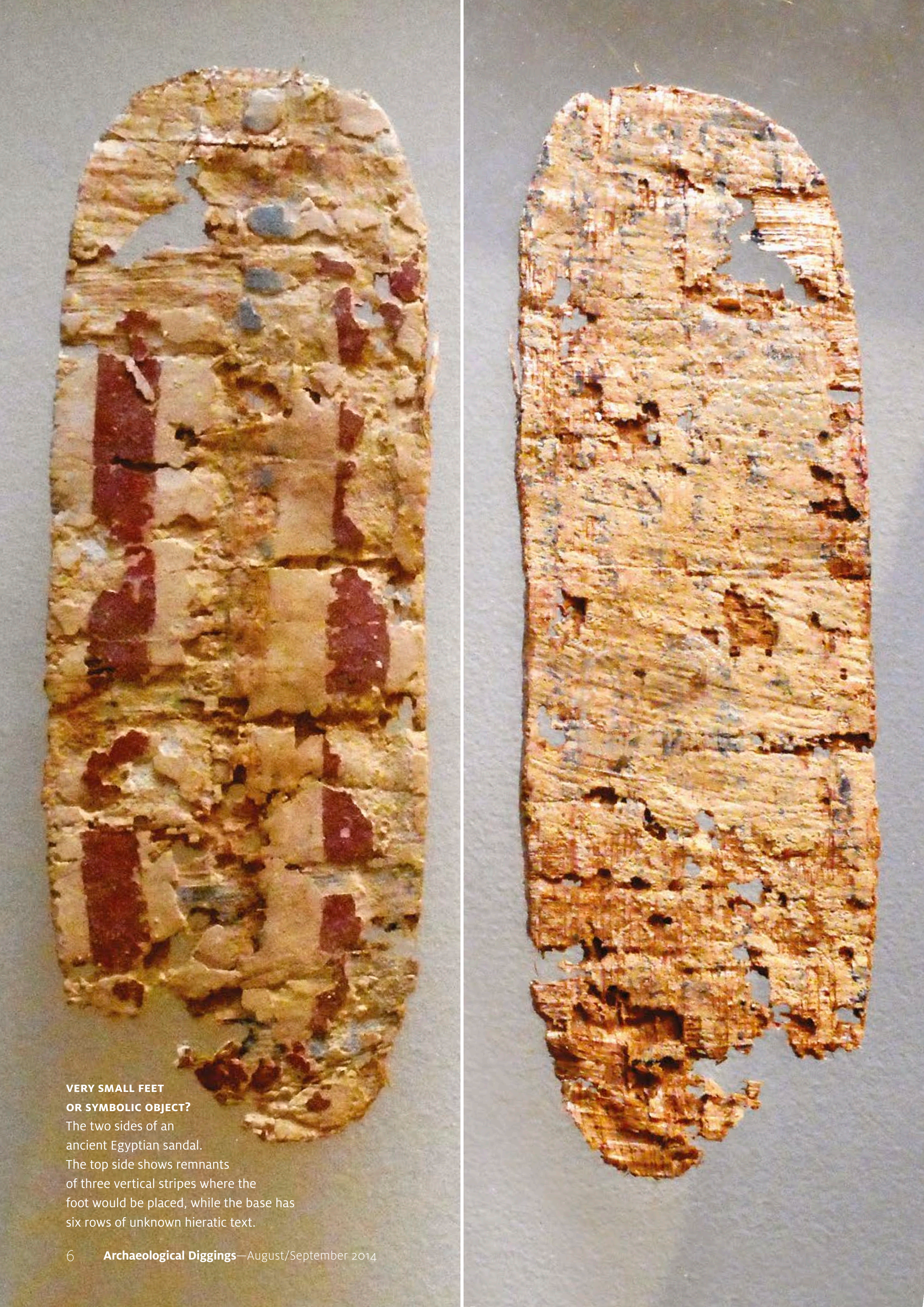
Our upcoming tours have proved very popular this year. By the time you receive this magazine, our "Footsteps" tour to Iran, Jordan, Israel and Turkey will be about to commence. It will be too late to join that tour, but there is still a brief window of time to join our "Great Museums" tour to London, Paris and Berlin, and our "Lost Civilisations" tour to Egypt, Italy, Mexico and Peru. Since they begin in late September, this will be your last chance to secure a place in one or both of these tours. Contact us immediately to take an unforgettable journey of discovery.

So with that, I trust you will enjoy reading our new-look magazine.

Gary Webster

DESTROYED PAGAN IDOLS, such as this one of the Canaanite storm god, is just one of the clues in the puzzle of who destroyed Hazor.

PHOTO: GARY WEBSTER



VERY SMALL FEET OR SYMBOLIC OBJECT? The two sides of an ancient Egyptian sandal. The top side shows remnants of three vertical stripes where the foot would be placed, while the base has six rows of unknown hieratic text.

Footwear for Eternity

A pair of brightly coloured sandals from an Egyptian tomb caught **Suzette Hartwell's** attention.

A SMALL PAIR OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN SANDALS, dating to 713–332 B.C. and measuring just 19 cm long and a narrow 6 cm in width, are housed in my private archaeology collection. These two flat, weaved and painted pieces of papyrus are the remnants of a pair of votive sandals, whose exact provenance is unknown, the gallery label simply stating "Egypt." They are mounted in a frame on the wall of my living room.

As the present custodian, I have been intrigued as to their purpose and what we might learn from them. Would they have fitted an adult back in the days of ancient Egypt? Or were they for a child? As a votive object that was placed in a tomb for the use by the deceased in the afterlife, did they actually fit the person they were intended for? Or were they merely a symbolic object, manufactured in a one-size-fits-all style? The mummy these sandals related to is not noted in the archive record as being present, so we have no way of knowing if they would have really fitted. But, would it really matter in the case of a votive object? For the Egyptians, when one was "born again" in the afterlife, the objects buried with the owner would be whole again and ready to be used.

EGYPTIANS AND THE AFTERLIFE

One of the most important aspects when planning one's final resting place for eternity was that one's name and identity be remembered, as the ancient Egyptians believed that to speak of the dead was to make them live again. A tomb was to be well-prepared and equipped with the requisites for the afterlife—ideally decorated with literary expressions and furnished with visual representations of beer, bread, linen, oils, wines and other goods.

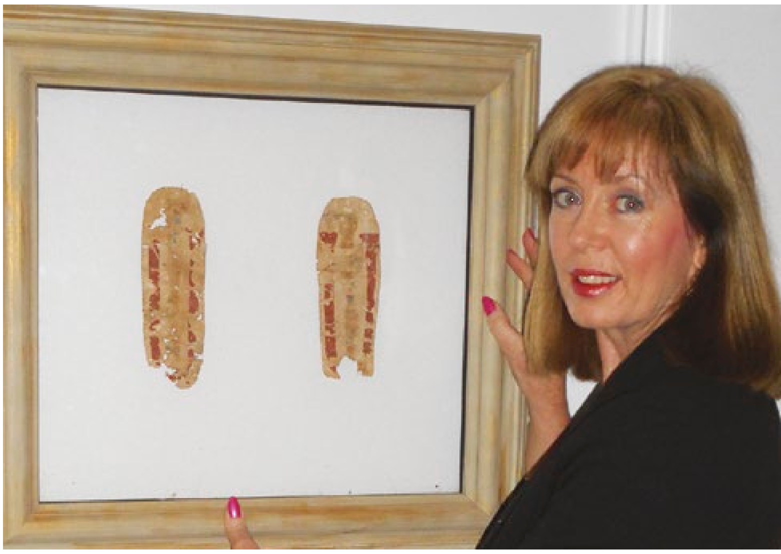
Models of granaries and objects of everyday life may have been placed in the tomb as well, ready to be magically used in the afterlife. Evidence abounds in tombs, shrines and temples where small votive artefacts—models of the real thing such as beer jars, gods, *shabtis* (small servant statues ready to serve the deceased in the afterlife), amulets, small figurines of animals, plaques and even model ears were deposited in the belief of either pacifying a deity, petitioning them or seeking a blessing for use in the afterlife.

The fundamental Egyptian religious belief of an afterlife and the need to be prepared for it, even if it was simply with a small pot placed with the deceased, endured well before recorded Egyptian history.

BACK TO THE SANDALS

Both papyrus sandals are missing the toe loops that would have allowed for them to be secured to the foot; this has been lost to time so only the silhouette of a foot shape is present. The sandals are each painted where the

THE AUTHOR, Suzette Hartwell, with the pair of ancient Egyptian votive sandals.



PHOTOS: SUZETTE HARTWELL

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PH.D. STUDENT KEVIN CAHAIL, holding a repaired *shabti* figure from a 2013 Penn Museum excavation of Pharaoh Senwosret III's tomb in Abydos. Such objects were often buried with the deceased for use in the afterlife.

THE CULTIVATED PAPYRUS THAT GROWS ALONG THE NILE RIVERBANK, used in a multitude of ways including paper, baskets, sandals, mats, rope, clothes and even boats.

PHOTOS: JOE WEGNER—PENN MUSEUM | ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

foot would be placed with remnants of three vertical stripes, the two outer in a red-brown shade and the inner stripe a pale blue, all forming and widening to a lotus shape at the top. The lotus plant, particularly the blue lotus (*nymphaea caerulea)* opens in the morning to receive the sun and was the symbol of the re-emerging sun after the dark of the evening and therefore the symbol of rebirth.

On the bottom of both sandals are six rows of yet undecipered hieratic text that are written in faint black ink. It is possible that the text names the traditional enemies of Egypt. If this is the case, the symbolism lies in the fact that when the deceased came to life again and wore the shoes, he or she would be stamping on the enemy, crushing them eternally. Alternatively, it may read as a passage from *The Book of the Dead,* a set of spells to safely guide the deceased through the *duat,* or underworld, and through to the afterlife. Therefore, both the top and underneath of the sandals with their decorated elements allowed for a visual and significant symbolic religious statement. However, until the text is deciphered, this is conjecture.

The papyrus plant (*cyperus papyrus),* which grew in ancient Egypt, was one of the most useful, adaptable and readily available resources for the community. It was bound into sandals, bags and pots, it could be twisted into twine and formed into rope, and lent itself to rafts, writing and drawing parchment. The name paper derives from the word *papyrus*. Like clay, another virtually unlimited resource and the basis for countless pots, jars, bricks and building material, it was the plastic of its day, but unfortunately due to the friable nature of papyrus it is susceptible to decay. Given their rather delicate nature in many instances, the items under discussion are even more outstanding for having survived the millennia—a pair of papyrus sandals, created as a votive object and placed in a tomb in Egypt and now housed in a country on the other side of the world.

As such, they could be viewed in essence as a gift from nature and fashioned into a votive object to serve that purpose for the deceased in the afterlife. ◆

DANNY HERMAN
Israeli archaeologist and tour guide with a passion for sharing the history of his country with visitors.

New Montfort Crusader Castle Dig

ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING AND BLOODY periods of mediaeval times in the Holy Land is the Crusader Period. The remains of castles of the "Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem" can be seen right across Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

Montfort (French for "strong mountain") was established as a spur fort in 1229 by the German Teutonic knights in the Western Galilee.

The fort was built on a cliff above Kziv Brook, and it is one of the finest examples of a mediaeval spur castle in the east. It had two moats, massive defensive walls, storerooms, stables, a keep, a refectorium and a church.

In 1266, the Mamluk leader, Baibars, besieged Montfort but failed to conquer it. He returned five years later and, following nine days of undermining the southern outer wall, the knights surrendered. They were permitted to retreat to Akko with their belongings and later to Venice and Austria, where their library and archive is kept to this day.

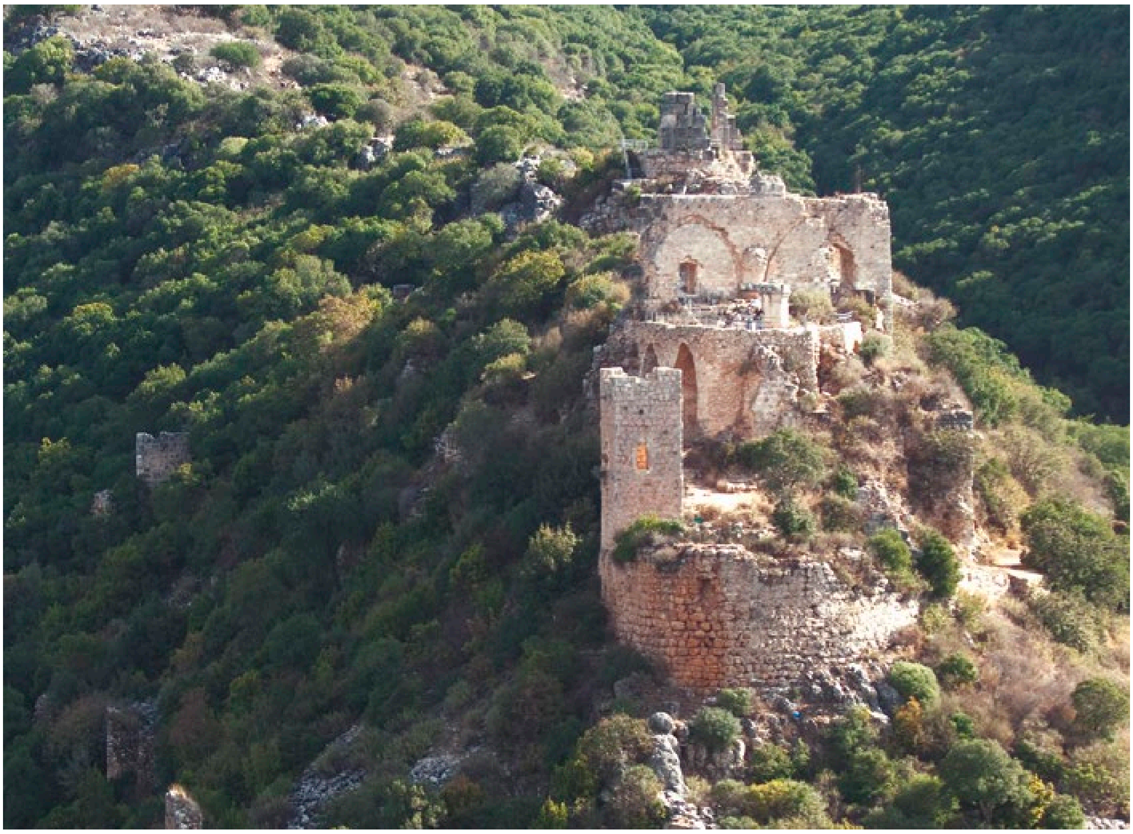
In accordance with the Mamluk policy of destruction beyond possible reuse, Baibars ordered the razing of the fort and so only its ground floor remained through the centuries.

The first excavations at the site were conducted in 1926 by an expedition of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. They uncovered parts of the fort and various artefacts, which were all removed to the museum. A proper report of the excavation was never made.

In 2007, Prof Adrian Boaz of Haifa University resumed excavations at Montfort after a detailed survey. A conservation project is planned to follow.

In the latest season of excavation (2013), important and unique evidence

MONTFORT CASTLE is an archaeological site of a thirteenth century Crusader fortress in the Upper Galilee. The site was a stronghold of the German Teutonic knights until the Mamluk leader, Baibars, destroyed the fortress in 1271.



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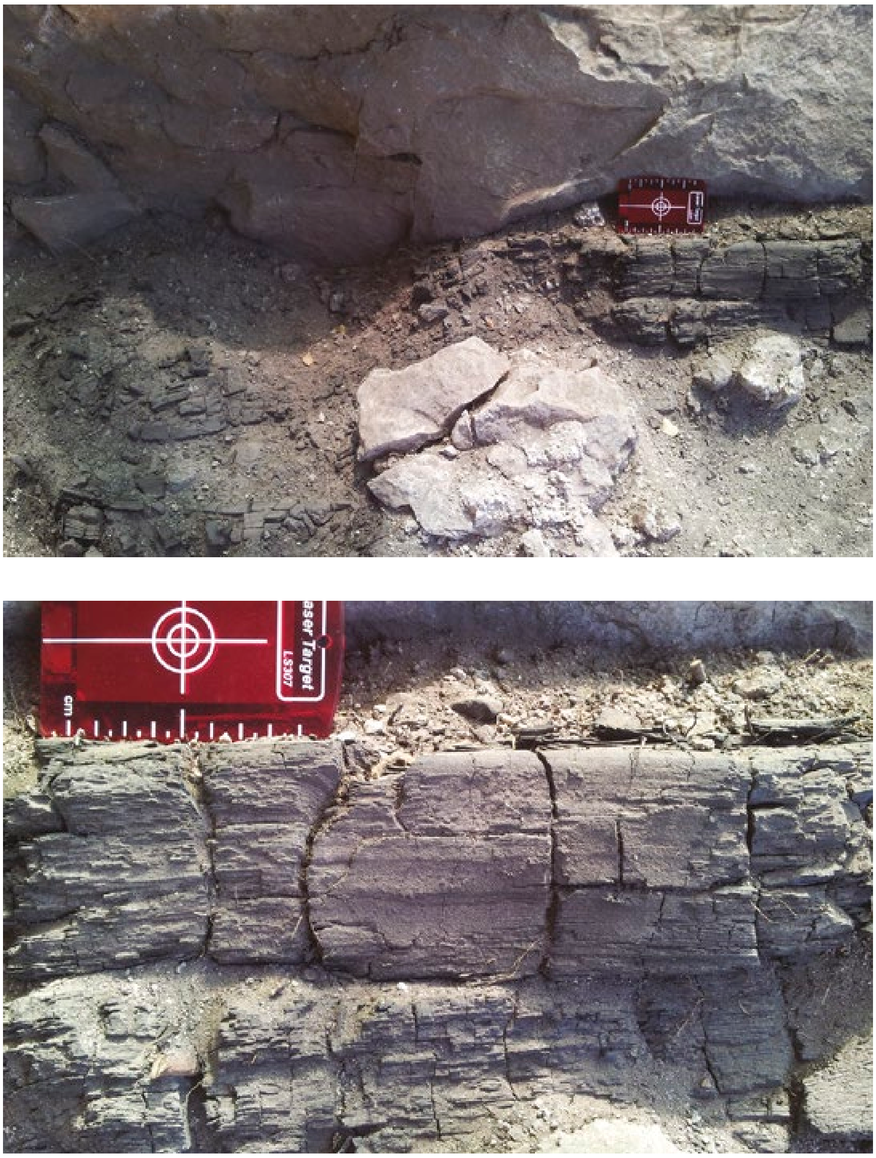


PHOTOS: ADRIAN BOAS

EXCAVATIONS AT MONTFORT by Prof Adrian Boaz revealed the remains of a burnt wooden beam under the foundations of Montfort castle. A closeup of the wooden beam is pictured above. The beam was placed and then burnt by the Mamluk forces in their attack on the site in 1271. Such a "sapping" technique is well recorded by historical sources, but only now has archaeological evidence of the practice been found.

of the Mamluk conquest of Montfort were uncovered. The attackers would dig under the foundations of the Crusaders' castles and then set the tunnel on fire. The fire caused the collapse of the wall, which enabled the attacking forces to breach them. While the tactic is well-known from contemporary historical sources, it is only recently that archaeological evidence of the practice has been found.

Montfort was conquered by Baibars using the same technique and despite the fire causing the collapse of the walls, Boaz's team found fragments of one of the wooden beams in the tunnel, mute evidence for the drama that terminated Montfort as a Crusader stronghold.

Second Temple footing found?

A PARTICULAR STONE FOUND among the foundations of the Western Wall of Herod's Temple, according to its excavator, Eli Shukrun, could have been from the Second Temple. Indeed, the stone is of higher quality than all the other stones of that wall. It would have been carefully chosen from a *meleke* (Arabic, meaning "royal") quarry; it has no boss around its edges (unlike almost all other stones of the Western Wall) and is uniquely smoothed by a comb chisel.

"When I found the stone, I was puzzled," Eli told me. "*What could such a stone be doing here?* I thought. Gradually I developed a scenario that could explain its presence. The stone was prepared for use in the Temple building itself but for some reason there was no need for it. Being so, it was decided to use it in the expansion project of the Temple Mount, and so it was placed in the foundation of the Western Wall, under the contemporary street level, so no-one saw it. Such a stone would stand out if visible and would interfere with the architectural harmony of the rest of the Western Wall."

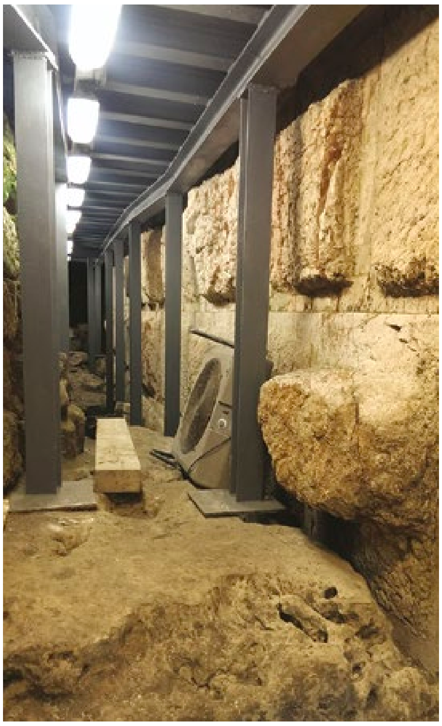
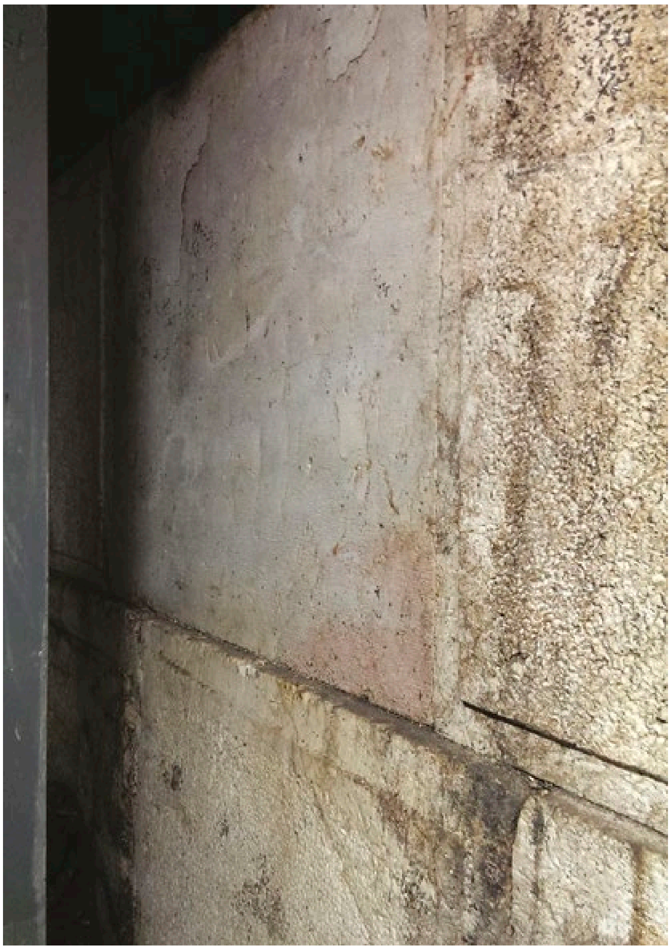
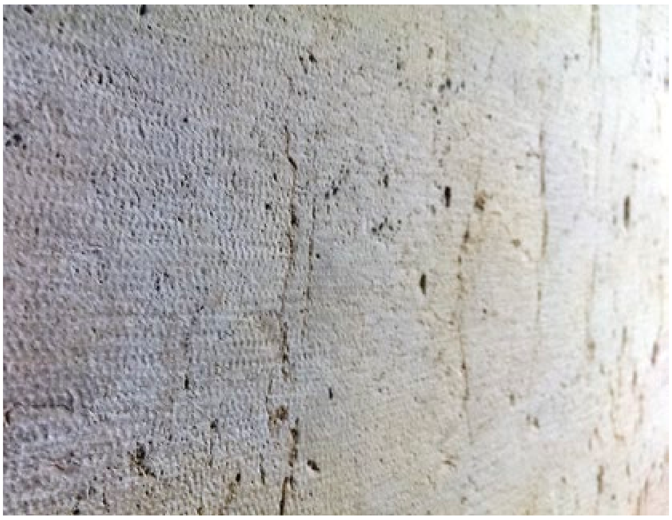


PHOTO: DANNY HERMAN

THE UNDERGROUND PATH, which leads below ground level to the Temple stone.





TEMPLE STONE *in situ*, among other stones of the Western Wall and right, a close-up showing evidence of the use of a comb chisel.

Dr Eilat Mazar, who led a project to document every stone in the Temple's retaining walls, agrees that this stone is unusual. "It doesn't prove it was indeed meant to be placed in the Temple itself, but it looks like it was intended for a more majestic structure than the Western retaining wall."

I just had to see the stone for myself. Following Shukrun's instructions, I made my way to the underground excavation site at the Western Wall and after climbing over fences and scrambling across wooden beams, I eventually found the stone! It was indeed unusual and of high quality. It stood out from all of the other stones in the wall. So have we uncovered the first evidence of the architectural style of the stones used for constructing the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem? The thought is mind-boggling and I trust further excavation will uncover more evidence.

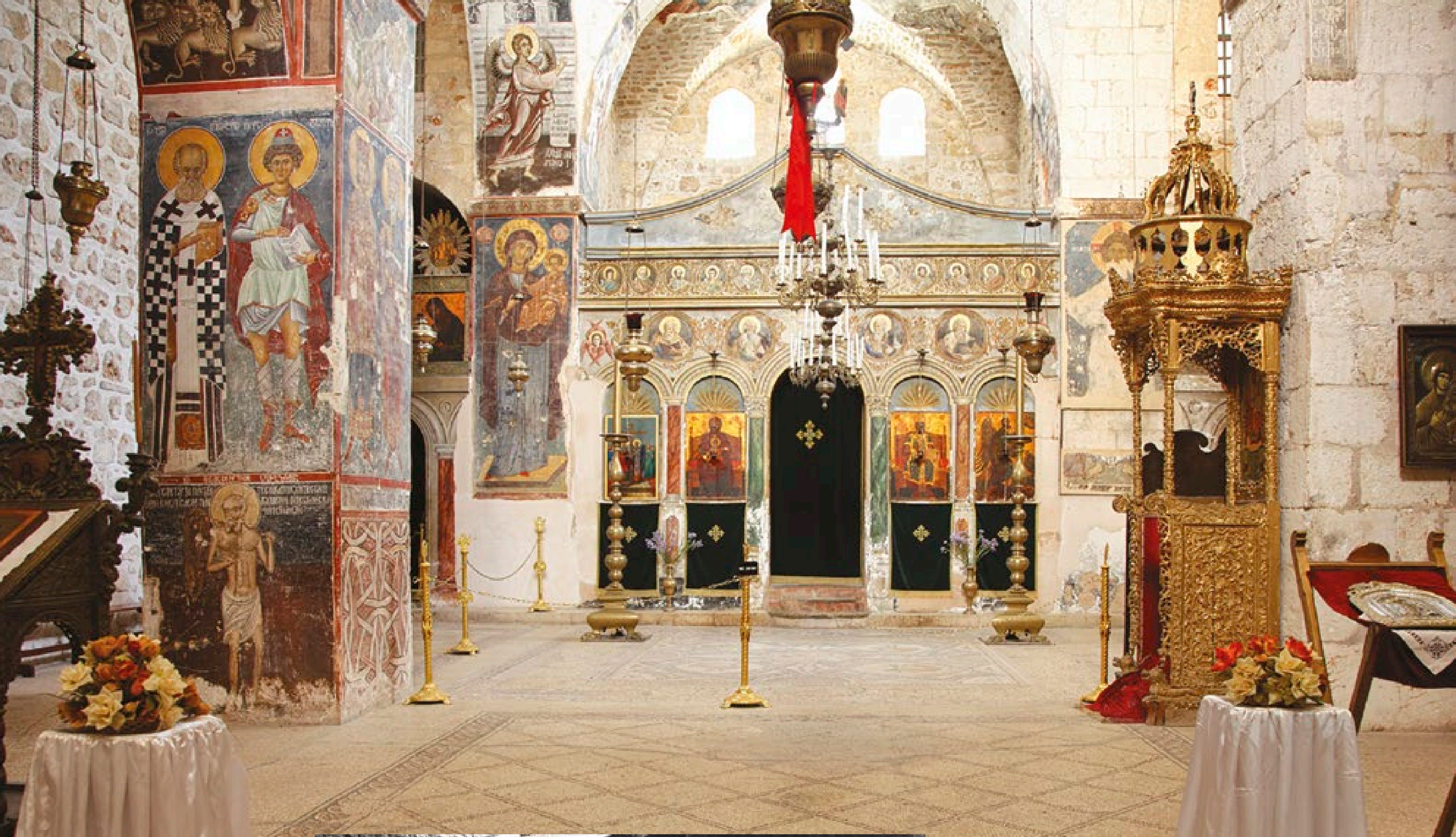
Site of the Cross?

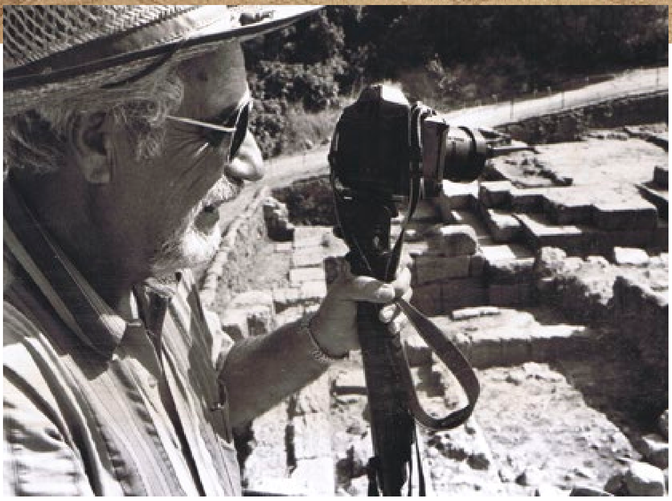
THE MONASTERY OF THE CROSS is a Greek Orthodox monastery located in the Valley of the Cross, in West Jerusalem. The first church on the site was built in the fourth century A.D., according to local tradition. It was constructed by Queen Helena, mother of Constantine, who identified it as the burial place of Adam's head and over which allegedly grew a tree that produced the wood for the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth.

In the eleventh century and several decades before the conquest of the Holy Land by the Crusaders, the site was developed by Georgian Christians (the Georgian Order) into a monastery. But in Ottoman times, the Georgians of the monastery fell into debt when their accountant fled with the monastery's treasury (he was later assassinated). As a result, in 1685 the monastery was sold to the Greek Orthodox Church who enlarged the complex and changed many of the Georgian inscriptions in

THE MONASTERY OF THE CROSS, the Byzantine monastery located outside the Old City of Jerusalem. Its name is based on the tradition that it stands where the tree grew that was used to make Christ's cross. The bell tower was added by the Greeks in the nineteenth century.

PHOTO: DANNY HERMAN





MONASTERY OF THE CROSS. The interior of the main church. There is a door on the left, which leads into what is called Lot's Chapel. A golden circle marks the place of a former hole in the ground, which by local tradition was the place where the biblical Lot planted a tree, which eventually was used in the construction of Jesus' cross—a variation of a fourth century A.D. tradition.

VASSILIOS TZAFERIS photographing the remains of a building believed to be the Palace of Agrippa II, in Banias, Israel.

PHOTOS: ALEXANDER GATSENKO—ISTOCKPHOTO | VASSILIOS TZAFERIS

the wall paintings (frescos), to reflect the Greek occupancy and tradition. Today, the site is maintained by four Greek monks, one of whom, Vassilios Tzaferis, has served in the monastery since the 1960's, while also becoming a prominent archaeologist in Israel.

Tzaferis was born on the Greek island of Samos in 1936. Although from a poor family, at the age of 14, he was sent to Jerusalem, where he was educated to become a monk. As a young adult he was placed in the Monastery of the Cross, but Tzaferis had plans of his own and in addition to marrying, trained as an archaeologist at the Hebrew University.

Upon obtaining his PhD, Tzaferis conducted several excavations on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), and in 1991, was appointed head of excavations and surveys for the IAA, a position he held for 10 years. Tzaferis has led several important excavations throughout the country, but perhaps his most famous find was a bone box he uncovered in Jerusalem, which contained a metal nail piercing the human heel bone. This was the first tangible evidence ever found relating to crucifixion; in fact, the only evidence ever found (see Michael Caba's "Crucifixion: History and Practice," June/July 2014 issue of ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGGINGS). ◆

Take a tour of The Monastery of the Cross in Jerusalem with Danny Herman on our digital edition.

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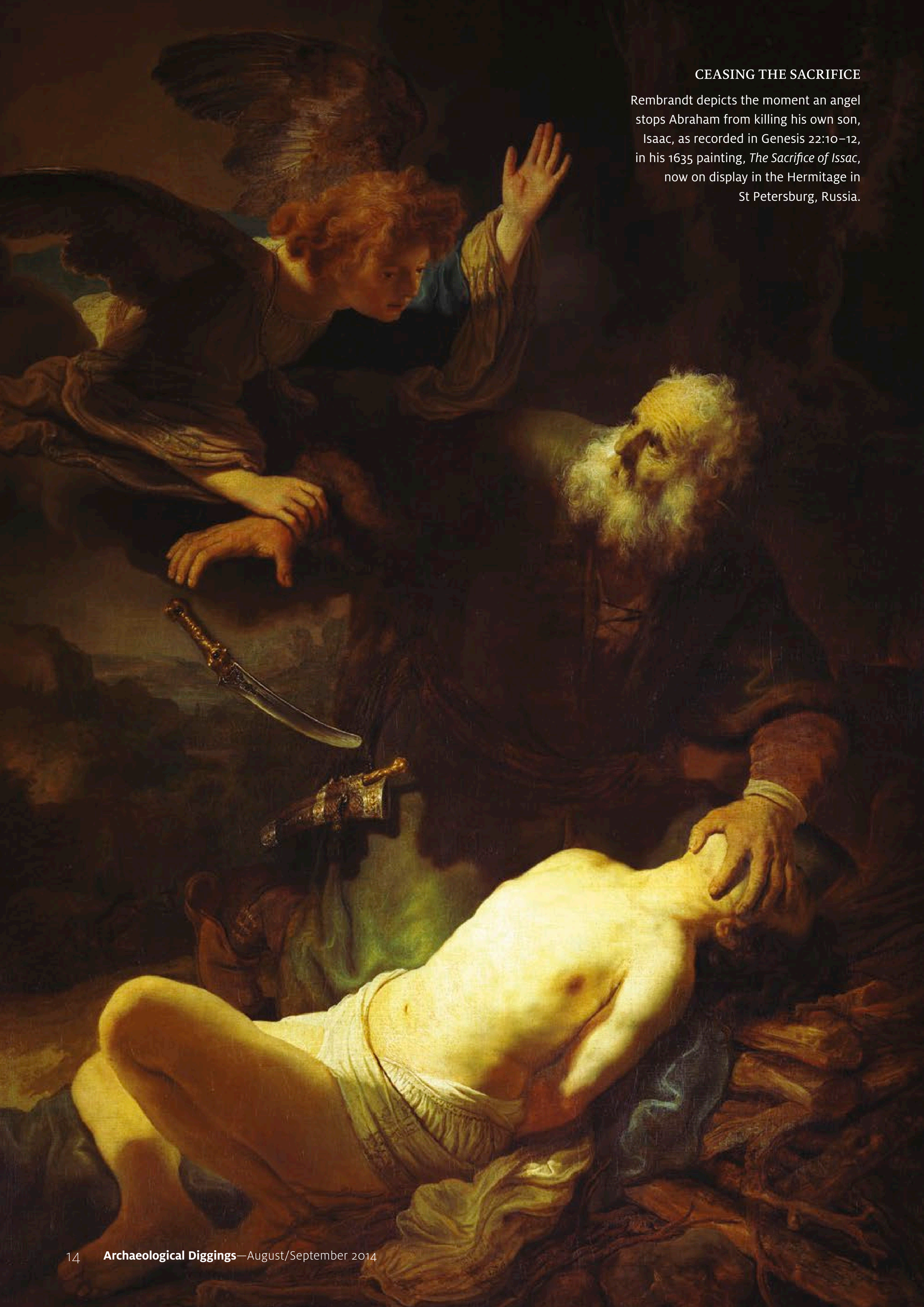

CEASING THE SACRIFICE

Rembrandt depicts the moment an angel stops Abraham from killing his own son, Isaac, as recorded in Genesis 22:10–12, in his 1635 painting, *The Sacrifice of Issac*, now on display in the Hermitage in St Petersburg, Russia.

HUMAN SACRIFICE

the good, the bad and the ugly

Preserved bodies that have been sacrificed to gods are being discovered the world over. But were they victims or was there a "higher calling"? **Michael Caba** explores the long history of human sacrifice to reveal the good beyond the gruesome.

THE FATHER LED THE WAY TO THE DESIGNATED spot and built the altar himself. After the wood for the fire was arranged on the altar, he tied up his son and hoisted him on top to be killed. Yet, as the knife was raised a voice was heard, "Do not lay a hand on the boy."[1] Thus the practice of human sacrifice was outlawed forever for most of those in Western culture. Indeed, this story and its dramatic ending will be recognised by many as the account of Abraham and Isaac from the Bible and the practice of human sacrifice faded from the societies influenced by this book.

Nonetheless, the ritual killing of human beings has actually played a significant role in the broader landscape of human culture. Though people have all too frequently turned violent against one another via war and wanton criminality, ritual killing falls into a unique class by itself. In essence, it is socially-sanctioned homicide for the attainment of some higher end and it is generally separated into two categories, namely, (1) the sacrifice of one or more humans to a deity to achieve divine favour and (2) the killing of servants in order that they may, presumably, serve their human masters in the afterlife. In effect, the innocent die that others may benefit and the stories of this practice are in many cases quite heartrending. Thus, the reader should be aware that what follows can be troubling and that child sacrifice is mentioned.

THE BAD

In the title of this article I have used the words, "the good, the bad and the ugly." We shall take these out of order and save "the good" to the end; instead, an example of the bad is presented here first.

In the ancient city of Ur—the ruins of which are located in the southern part of modern day Iraq—archaeologists have located the Royal Cemetery in which elite citizens were buried roughly 4500 years ago (c. 2600–2450 B.C.). Within this cemetery there is an aptly named site known as the Great Death Pit that originally contained 74 fashionably dressed bodies arranged in several rows. The deceased were accompanied by musical instruments and two ornate statuettes, each of which is commonly referred to as the Ram in a Thicket.[2] Yet, despite the visual enhancements

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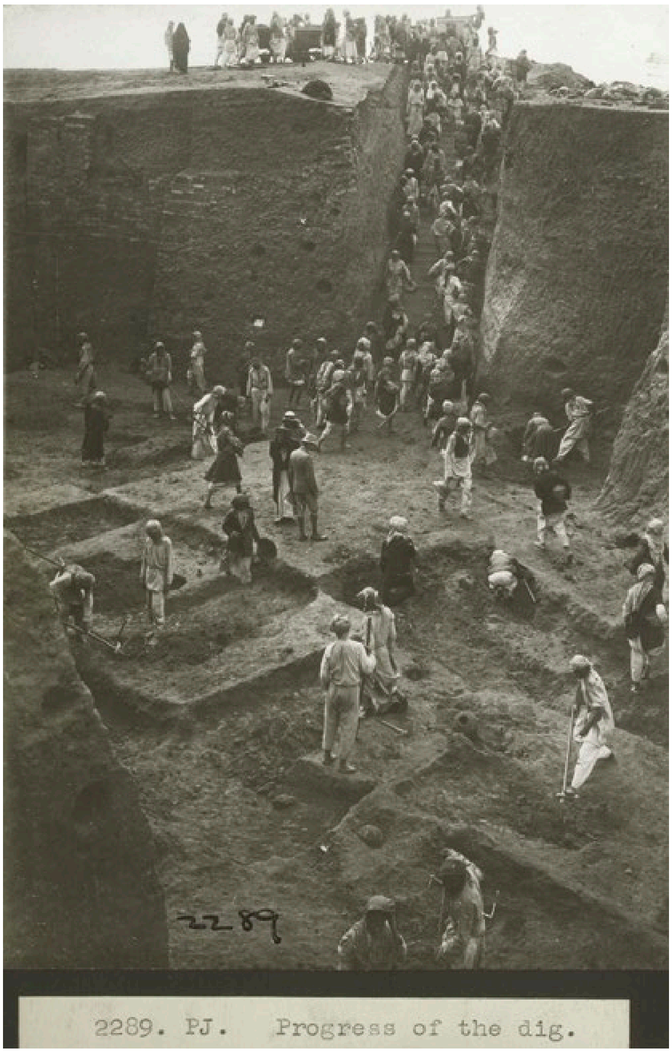
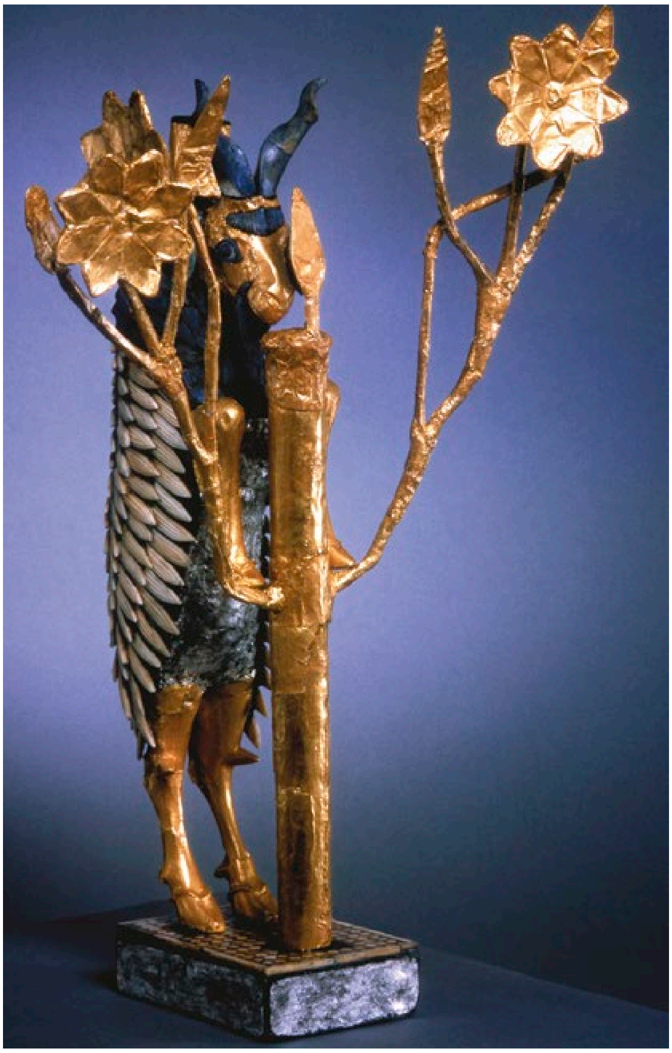


EXCAVATING THE GREAT DEATH PIT IN UR, 1933–1934. The pit is believed to be the site of a royal tomb because of the layout and ornaments found in it. However, out of the 74 attendants found, no royal body was discovered. Originally, it was believed these servants were willingly ceremoniously poisoned, but recent studies indicate that they were violently killed by brutal blunt force trauma.



THE RAM IN THE THICKET (2650–2550 B.C.). This 45-cm-tall figure is one of an almost identical pair found in the Great Death Pit. It was created using gold, silver, lapis lazuli (a deep blue, semi-precious stone), copper, shell, red limestone and bitumen (tar) and may have been part of a larger sculpture. It was badly crushed when it was found but has since been very well restored.

PHOTOS: PENN MUSEUM

from the bright colours and expensive grave goods, it now appears that the 74 inhabitants died as part of a grand ritual ceremony. In fact, experts believe that they were actually the attendants of the royal persons who were also buried within the confines of the cemetery and that the servants were dispatched to accompany their rulers into the afterlife. Further, although the original excavator surmised that the dead had taken their own lives by voluntary suicide via the drinking of a poisonous draught, recent studies indicate that they were "violently killed by means of blunt force trauma."[3] Based on this type of evidence, one scholar has summed up the historical situation as follows: "Mass human sacrifices were particularly a feature of ancient states whose dead leaders required their courtiers and followers to accompany them into the afterworld."[4]

Next we turn to several examples from the biblical text that portray both Israel's enemies and, surprisingly enough, Israelites themselves engaging in a particularly unpleasant form of human sacrifice, specifically, that of children. The first example concerns Mesha, a Moabite king who sacrificed his own son when he found himself at war with Israel, as detailed in the following biblical text:

> *When the king of Moab saw that the battle had gone against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed. Then he took his firstborn son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him as a sacrifice on the city wall.*[5]

During his reign, King Mesha was a regular adversary of Israel, and of particular interest is the monument he left behind on which he describes his conflicts with his neighbours, even giving the name of the god to whom he likely sacrificed his firstborn son. This artefact is called the Mesha Stela (aka, the Moabite Stone). The object now resides in the Louvre and it reads in part: "I built this high place for Chemosh in Qarhoh, a high place of salvation, because he delivered me from all assaults, and because he let me see my desire on all my adversaries."[6] Though it is not known if the sacrifice of his son is specifically envisioned in the text on this monument, the artefact nonetheless gives us

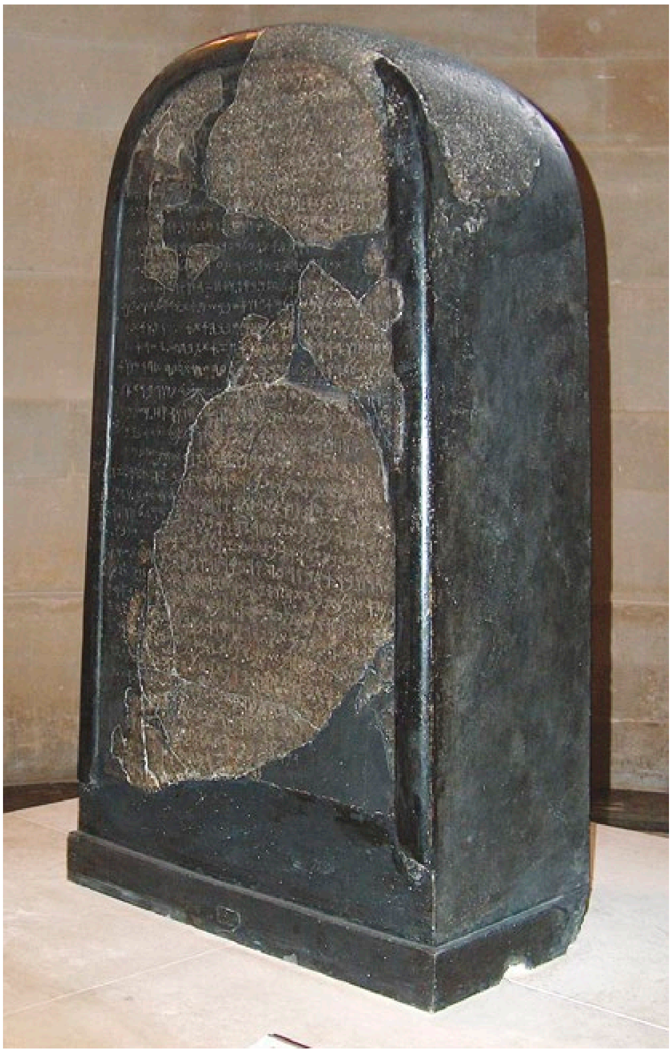


PHOTO: GARY WEBSTER

MESHA STELA, also known as the Moabite Stone, contains a famous inscription from ancient Moab, created around 840 B.C., and standing one metre in height. It describes events from the history of Israel that are also recorded in the Bible. The brown fragments are pieces of the original stele, whereas the smoother black material is a reconstruction from the 1870s after local villagers smashed it.

a good idea of the sheer attachment and devotion of King Mesha to his god Chemosh.

Moving next to the Israelites. Despite the precedent of their patriarch Abraham being halted in process—and even contrary to the commands of Moses himself as outlined in the Torah (e.g. Deuteronomy 18:10)—at times the Israelites themselves were not above the practice of child sacrifice. Indeed, despite the clear admonitions against the practice, the ritual apparently still occurred as indicated by the following proclamation from the prophet Jeremiah:

> *The people of Judah have done evil in my eyes, declares the Lord. They have set up their detestable idols in the house that bears my Name and have defiled it. They have built the high places of Topheth in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to burn their sons and daughters in the fire—something I did not command, nor did it enter my mind.*[7]

One point of interest in the above quote pertains to the place identified as the "Valley of Ben Hinnom," in which child sacrifice is said to have occurred. This valley is located on the southern side of the ancient city of Jerusalem and it eventually came to represent the place of final judgement in the teaching of the New Testament. As example, in Matthew 5:22, the English word *hell* in the New International Version is a translation of the underlying Greek word *Gehenna,* which is simply the Greek name for the "Valley of Ben Hinnom" spoken of by Jeremiah the prophet.[8]

But the practice of human sacrifice was not limited to just the ancient Near East, nor even to the Eastern Hemisphere for that matter. In fact, some of the more graphic illustrations of the practice come to us from the Americas, including those found at the spectacular ancient metropolis known as Teotihuacan.

The ruins of this sprawling urban area are located near modern day Mexico City and it is now known to have been the largest pre-Columbian city in the Americas, having reached the zenith of its power in the time frame of A.D. 300–600.[9] Among its eight square miles of development, it contained two large pyramids commonly known as the Pyramid of the Sun and the Pyramid of the Moon, with the latter being the object of recent excavations of some interest to our subject matter. In fact, deep within the Pyramid of the Moon archaeologists have now located a burial vault with 12 human bodies, all of which had their hands bound behind their backs prior to execution. In addition, 10 of the bodies were decapitated. Animals, too, were apparently victims of the ritual process. As a result, the scene was graphic enough to elicit the following remark from one of the leading archaeologists on the dig: "Whether the victims and animals were killed at the site or at a nearby place, this foundation ritual must have been one of the most terrifying acts recorded archaeologically in Mesoamerica."[10]

Yet, despite the gruesome nature of the aforementioned examples, they pale in comparison to the examples of institutionalised and even industrial levels of human sacrifice to which we now turn.

THE UGLY

"Carthage must be destroyed"[11] was frequently the final phrase uttered in speeches by the Roman statesman Marcus Cato. Even so, it now seems that Carthage itself sowed a great deal of destruction of its own, particularly among young children born to Carthaginian mothers. The evidence that the practice of child sacrifice was a regular part of Carthaginian culture is quite plentiful and includes ancient authors such as the Greek writer Kleitarchos (c. 300 B.C.) who gives us this disturbing description of the practice:

> *Out of reverence for Baal,*[12] *the Phoenicians, and especially the Carthaginians, whenever they seek to obtain some great favour, vow one of their children, burning it as a sacrifice to the deity if they are especially eager to gain success. There stands in their midst a bronze statue of Baal, its hands extended over a bronze [container of fire], the flames of which engulf the child. When the flames fall upon the body, the limbs contract and the open mouth seems almost to be laughing, until the contracted [body] slips quietly into the [container of fire].*[13]

Though seemingly extreme, even hard to believe, the

PHOTO: GIRAUD PATRICK

KILLING THEIR CHILDREN. Cemeteries known as tophets—after the biblical account of a place of human sacrifice—were excavated in the early twentieth century on the outskirts of Carthage, in modern Tunisia, and then at other Carthaginian sites in Sicily and Sardinia. Such discoveries confirm ancient Greek and Roman reports that the Carthaginian's regularly practiced child sacrifice to their gods.

above words do not stand alone in their testimony to the fact that the Carthaginians killed their offspring as offerings to the gods; in truth, thousands of inscriptions that are located in special burial grounds utilised for the remains of these children give witness to this fact. For instance, some inscribed messages in these special burial grounds make specific reference to the offering of a human victim who had not reached maturity (i.e. a child) and other declarations make note of the fact that the remains were an offering or dedication to one or more gods. Other messages even go so far as to announce that a person had offered a child in response to the fact that the god had "heard his voice."[14]

Following their untimely deaths, the incinerated remains of the children were then placed in urns and laid to rest in special sanctuaries commonly known today as *tophets,* which was originally a Hebrew word that can be translated as a "place of burning" or "roaster."[15] Including the city of Carthage itself, these open-air tophets have been found in as many as 11 different Carthaginian cities in the central Mediterranean area, regularly containing such features as altars, shrines and other cultic items.[16] Further, animal sacrifices were also included in the tophets and these were treated in the same manner (e.g. urns, inscriptions) as the human children. This fact has led some scholars to speculate that an animal could perhaps be substituted for a child if one of the latter was not readily available.[17] In any case, the record of the long-term Carthaginian practice of sacrificing their children to the gods is one of the more alarming to have come down to us from antiquity.

Even so, the zenith of human sacrifice appears to have been reached with the Aztecs of ancient Mexico who seem to have come as close as possible to perfecting the task of massive, ritualised slaughter. Estimates vary widely regarding the actual number of human victims of Aztec sacrifice; still, an approximation in the range of about 20,000 per year seems plausible.[18] Centrestage, so to speak, in this macabre ordeal, occurred in the capital city of Tenochtitlan, which was originally situated at the location of modern day Mexico City. Within this ancient city there was a temple that was used for ceremonial carnage and archaeological work along with the study of ancient Aztec mythology, have both helped to paint a more complete picture of the ritual process here and the reasoning behind it. The temple is referred to today as the Templo Mayor[19] and, though the structure is no longer fully in place, a model in the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City depicts the edifice as it originally stood.

During its heyday, victims were marched up its long dual staircases to the platform at the top of which twin shrines were located, one in honour of the god Huitzilopochtli and the other to the god Tlaloc.[20] Huitzilopochtli was the patron god of the Aztec people[21] and the divine song of his birth gives us the underlying mythology that was often reenacted on

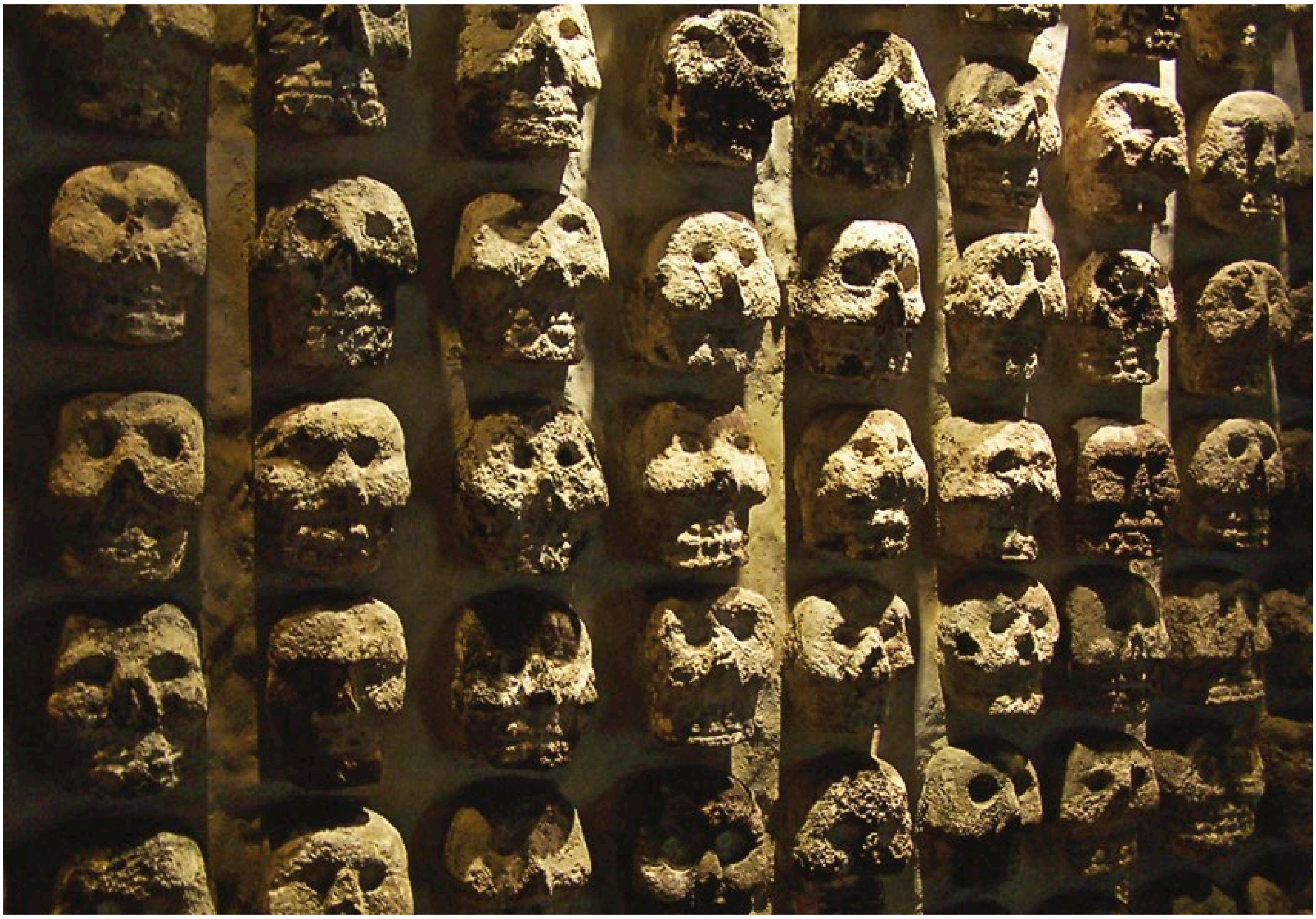


PHOTO: FOTOLIA.COM

A WALL OF HORRORS. The Aztec ruin of Templo Mayor were randomly discovered in Mexico City, in 1978, during excavation for the metropolitan subway. One of the most disturbing discoveries was the Tzompantli, a panel made of rows of human skulls sacrificed to the Aztec god Huitzilopochtli, then covered with stucco. The wall is now located in the Templo Mayor Museum, Mexico City.

the temple grounds. The song tells the story of Huitzilopochtli defending his own mother against an assault by her other children, and the climactic moment is reached when he kills his sister Coyolxauhqui and then rolls her body down a hill into a dismembered heap. The song reads:

> *With the serpent of fire he struck Coyolxauhqui, he cut off her head, and left it lying there on the slope of Coatepetl. The body of Coyolxauhqui went rolling down the hill, it fell to pieces, in different places fell her hands, her legs, her body.* [22]

In like manner, human victims were sacrificed on the platform at the top of the temple. Their still-beating hearts were cut out and then their bodies were rolled down the stairs in a manner that reenacted the song quoted above. Further, at the very base of the stairs, archaeologists have now located a massive round stone that depicts the dismembered body of Coyolxauhqui herself, which is a graphic

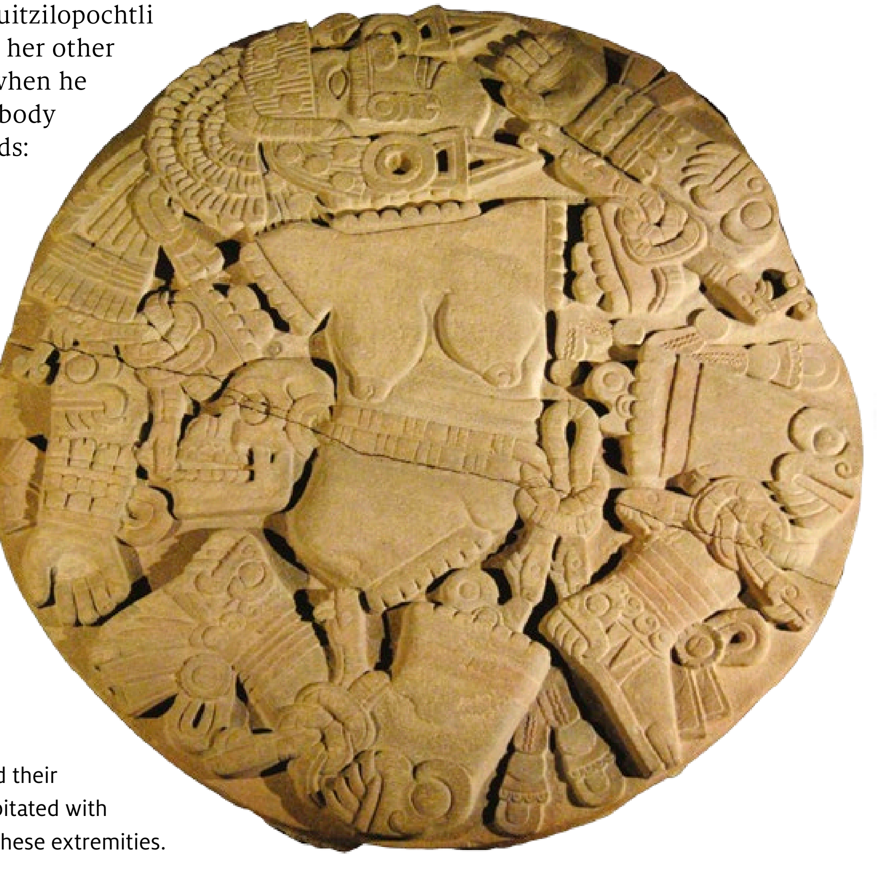


PHOTO: MIGUEL ANGEL ALVAREZ BERNARDO

A GOD'S DEMISE. With a diameter of around three metres, the Coyolxauhqui monolith was where the Aztecs sacrificed their victims. The relief shows the goddess, Coyolxauhqui, decapitated with mutilated arms and legs, and drops of blood flowing from these extremities.

illustration of her demise as told in the hymn.[23] This stone is an excellent example of how an archeological artefact can be linked to mythology to give a fuller picture of ancient beliefs and practices.

In essence, Aztec beliefs regarding human sacrifice are summarised as follows: “the key concepts include the sacredness of human blood, the idea that people owe a debt to the gods that must be repaid with blood and human lives, and the notion of a close relationship between life and death. . . . If humans did not repay this debt with blood, the consequences would be dire.”[24] The technical term for a sacrifice intended to pacify the wrath of the gods is known as “propitiation” or “expiation” by scholars. To facilitate these beliefs, the Aztecs not only developed the items discussed above, but also a whole toolkit of flint sacrificial knives, stone bowls and boxes for guarding blood and hearts (all of which have been found by archaeologists) were made to order.[25] Clearly, pinnacles of expertise and dedication to the practice of human sacrifice were reached in the case of the Aztecs.

> Unlike typical propitiation in which humans brought a sacrificial victim to appease their angry gods, the ancient biblical manuscripts inform us that in this case God gave Himself, through His Son, as a sacrifice on account of His love for His erring children.

THE GOOD

But enough of these bloody spectacles; let us turn our attention to the “good.” Let us look to examples of human sacrifice that are commendable in their application, as surprising as this thought may be at the outset. Indeed, before we allow the previous examples of the bloody science of socially-sanctioned homicide to drive us to despair over the condition of the human race, let us remember the many examples of *self*-sacrifice that can stir our hearts to admiration of those who practiced this. For instance, think of firemen who have made the ultimate sacrifice in their efforts to save others, or ordinary citizens who place themselves in harm’s way to snatch others from the brink of death. For that matter, let us consider other types of self-sacrifice, such as parents who expend themselves in years of labour to provide for their children, or children who return the favour in kind through the care of their elderly parents. Clearly, many examples of this type of sacrifice could be given. For sure, these latter cases do not typically involve the actual death of the participants; nonetheless, these living self-sacrifices can involve real hardship on a number of levels.

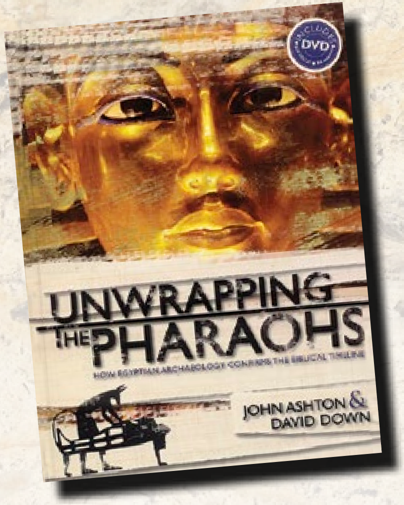
Finally, one additional human sacrifice needs to be considered, specifically, the death of Jesus of Nazareth as documented in the Bible and also by ancient non-Christian historians such as Tacitus. Like the human sacrifices of the ancient world, His death was a propitiatory or expiatory sacrifice.[26]

However, unlike typical propitiation in which humans brought a sacrificial victim to appease their angry gods, the ancient biblical manuscripts inform us that in this case God gave Himself, through His Son, as a sacrifice on account of His love for His erring children.[27]

This brings us back to where we began with Abraham and a tantalising clue in the Bible that likely encouraged the patriarch to consider God’s faithfulness. In this regard, Jesus said that Abraham himself actually looked forward to the time of His coming.[28] As such, Abraham received a double dose of love, namely, his own son was spared from the sacrificial knife and he was also informed by God about the coming One, the very Light of the world. ◆

ENDNOTES

1. Genesis 22:12.
2. These animals are more likely goats rather than the commonly used designation of ram. For further elaboration on the items located in the Great Death Pit, see M Vidale, “PG 1237, Royal cemetery of Ur: Patterns in death,” *Cambridge Archeological Journal*, vol 21, no 3 (2011), pp 427–451.
3. A Baadsgaard et al, “Human corpse preservation in the royal cemetery of Ur,” *Antiquity*, vol 85, no 327 (2011), p 38.
4. M Parker-Pearson, “The practice of human sacrifice,” *BBC–History–Ancient History in Depth*, February 11, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/british_prehistory/human_sacrifice_01.shtml.
5. 2 Kings 3:26, 27.
6. B T Arnold and B E Beyer, *Readings from the ancient Near East: Primary sources for Old Testament study* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), p 161.
7. Jeremiah 7:30, 31.
8. G W Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol 2, p 423.
9. *Oxford Dictionaries*, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/Teotihuacán.
10. Arizona State University, “Sacrificial burial deepens mystery at Teotihuacan, but confirms the city’s militarism,” *ScienceDaily*, http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2004/12/041203084345.htm.
11. Plutarch, ed, *The Parallel Lives* in The Loeb Classical Library, vol 2 (2014) http://penelope.uchicago.edu/ Thayer/E/Roman/texts/Cato_Major.html.
12. Here and elsewhere in this quote, the original Greek text reads “Kronos” instead of Baal. Kronos is the Greek name for the Carthaginian god Ba’al Hammon.
13. Quoted in L E Stagner and S R Wolff, “Religious rite or population control?” *Archaeological Digest* (1984), http://www.basarchive.org/bswbBrowse.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=10&Issue=1&ArticleID=2&UserID=0. Michael Caba has supplied the bracketed words “container of fire” as a substitute for the original “brazier” for purposes of clarity.
14. P Xella et al, “Cemetery or sacrifice? Infant burials at the Carthage Tophet: Phoenician bones of contention,” *Antiquity* vol 87, no 338 (2013), p 1204.
15. L E Stager and J A Greene, “Were living children sacrificed to the gods? Yes,” *Archaeology Odyssey*, vol 29 no 31 (2000), http://members.bib-arch.org/publication.asp?PubID=BSAO&Volume=3&Issue=6&ArticleID=23.
16. Xella, 2013, p 1200.
17. Ibid, p 1204.
18. M Harner, “The enigma Of Aztec sacrifice,” *Natural History*, vol 86, no 4 (1977), p 46-51.
19. Spanish for “great or main temple.” See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Templo_Mayor.
20. M E Smith, “Aztecs,” *The Oxford Handbook of the Archeology of Ritual and Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p 558.
21. Ibid, p 564.
22. M León-Portilla, ed, “The birth of Huitzilopochtli, patron god of the Aztecs,” *Native MesoAmerican Spirituality: Ancient Myths, Discourses, Stories, Hymns, Poems From the Aztec, Yucatec, Quiche-Maya and Other Sacred Traditions* (Mawah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1980), p 224.
23. D Carrasco, *City of sacrifice: The Aztec empire and the role of violence in civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), p 49–87.
24. Smith, 2011, p 565.
25. Ibid, p 565.
26. Romans 3:25.
27. John 10:11–18.
28. John 8:56.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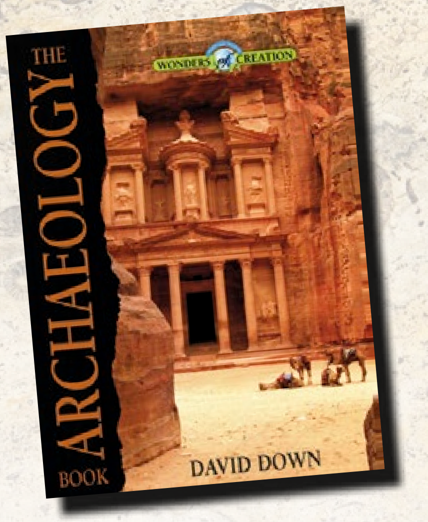
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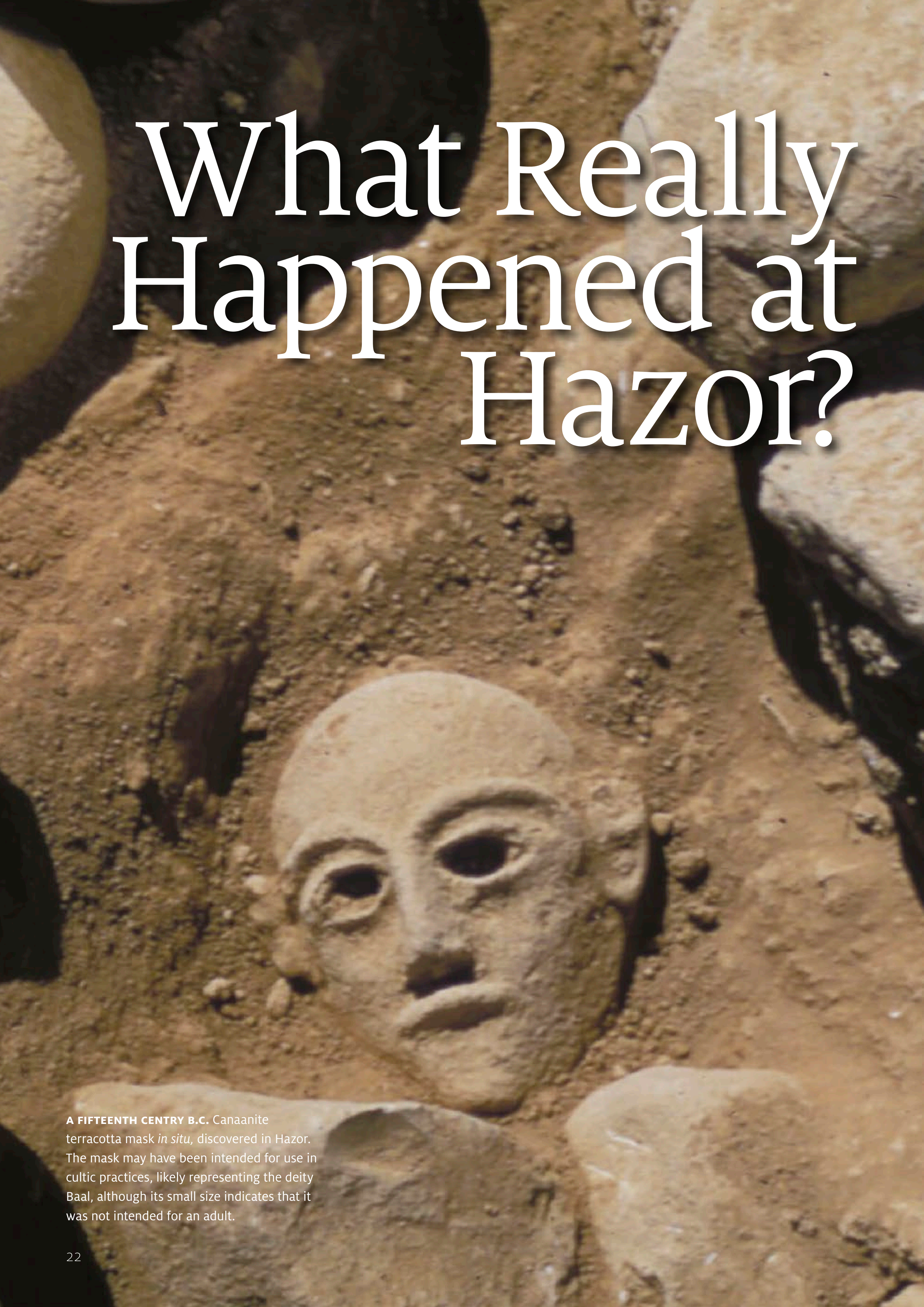
What Really Happened at Hazor?



A FIFTEENTH CENTRY B.C. Canaanite terracotta mask *in situ,* discovered in Hazor. The mask may have been intended for use in cultic practices, likely representing the deity Baal, although its small size indicates that it was not intended for an adult.

Ancient records and archaeological investigations reveal two different stories on the destruction of Hazor. **Titus Kennedy** looks into the accounts of these conquests to discover what really happened there.

LEBANON
Mediterranean Sea
HAZOR
ISRAEL
CAPERNAUM
Haifa
Tiberias
Mt. Carmel
Sea of Galilee
Nazareth
Megiddo

THE ANCIENT CITY OF HAZOR IS SITUATED IN THE Hula Valley, north of the Sea of Galilee, or Tiberius, as it is known today. Its massive mound and defensive ramparts can still be seen, thousands of years after their construction. Although at one time it was the most prominent settlement in the region of Canaan, Hazor has essentially been abandoned as a city for more than two millennia. In the Amarna Letters, Hazor is generally portrayed as a dominant and influential city ruled by the most powerful king in Canaan, an uncannily similar description to that found in the biblical book of Joshua.[1] As the most powerful city in Canaan of the Late Bronze Age (c. 1550–1200 B.C.), its defeat and destruction would have been significant in any struggle to control the region.[2] And because of its strategic importance, situated at Canaan's northern portal, the city of Hazor was attacked and conquered multiple times.

ANCIENT CONQUEST ACCOUNTS

Ancient documents record that Hazor was conquered perhaps five times during the period of the Late Bronze Age.

Three of the conquests are recorded by the Egyptians on the topographical (place record) lists at Karnak from the reigns of Thutmose III, Amenhotep II and perhaps Seti I.[3] The proposed Seti I conquest has also been suggested as referring to another city and so there may have been a total of only four claimed conquests of Hazor in the Late Bronze Age.[4] The other two conquests, claimed by the invading Israelites, are recorded in the biblical books of Joshua and Judges, occurring under the leadership of Joshua and Deborah.[5]

Archaeological investigations at the site, however, reveal only two clear destructions of the city that could be associated with claims of conquest in the ancient accounts.[6] This suggests that not all of the recorded conquests actually destroyed Hazor, but instead may have merely subjugated the city. Nowhere on the site are two phases of Late Bronze Age I occupation indicated[7]; therefore, only one destruction at the end of the period occurred. The continuous habitation until nearly 1400 B.C. further demonstrates that the city was not destroyed by either Thutmose III or Amenhotep II, as they claimed conquest of Hazor decades prior to this time. Although both of these Pharaohs included Hazor on their lists of conquered cities, that in itself does not necessitate destruction. Redford comments in relation to the Egyptian conquest of Hazor that "the word *destroy,* used with reference to this town, is not to be taken literally; Thutmose may have done no more than destroy its food supplies."[8] Amenhotep II also claimed that he conquered or destroyed Hazor on his Year Three conquest list, yet textual and occupational evidence demonstrates that Hazor was continually inhabited during this period and until after the reign of Thutmose IV.[9] Additional Egyptian documents such as Papyrus Hermitage 1116A, probably from late in the reign of Amenhotep II, lists Hazor as an inhabited city of Canaan and further establishes that the city had not been destroyed and abandoned. Therefore, the Egyptian conquests do not show up on the archaeological record.

The account of the conquest of Hazor in the book of Joshua, however, specifies destruction of the city by fire.[10] The conquest of Hazor recorded in Judges does not include specifics about the fate of the city, although it is possible that this attack, which destroyed the king of Hazor, also destroyed his city.[11] According to chronological information found in the Bible, combined with ancient king lists, the Joshua attack on Hazor would have occurred just before 1400 B.C., while the Deborah attack on Hazor would have occurred perhaps a decade before 1200 B.C.[12]

THE DESTRUCTIONS OF HAZOR IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE

The first destruction of Hazor in this period came at the end of Late Bronze Age I (c. 1400 B.C.). Garstang, who carried out the first real archaeological work at Hazor with brief excavations, found that the city had been destroyed in a massive fire—both on the acropolis and in the lower city.[13] Garstang concluded that the destruction layer he excavated in the lower city dated to c. 1400 B.C. and associated that with the conquest of Hazor led by Joshua. In the initial major excavations at Hazor carried out by Yadin, it was confirmed that Hazor suffered a fiery destruction around the end of the

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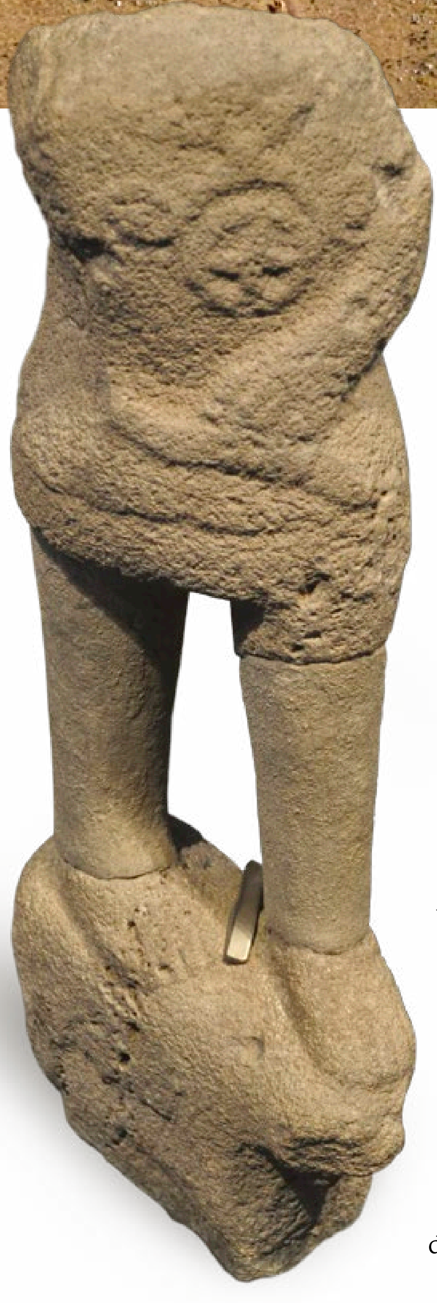

HAZOR, the view of the excavation site looking east. At one time Hazor was the most prominent settlement in the region of Canaan. Its massive mound and defensive ramparts are still visable today, thousands of years after their construction.

STORM GOD LOSES HIS HEAD. The discovery of cult statues from Hazor's second millennium B.C. Canaanite temple, which have been decapitated, such as this basalt statue of the storm god standing on a bull, suggest that the invading Israelites were involved in the town's destruction due to their practice of destroying pagan idols.

Late Bronze Age I.[14] Destruction of the city in the late fifteenth century B.C., including a massive fire, has been discovered at gates, temples, administrative buildings, cisterns and pottery workshops.[15] One extremely important chronological marker indicating that the city continued to be occupied through most of the fifteenth century B.C. and was destroyed near 1400 B.C. was the discovery of an Egyptian royal scarab of Pharaoh Thutmose IV. In a cave, excavators found, along with hundreds of ceramic vessels, a scarab bearing the name of Thutmose IV (Men-Kheperu-Re).[16] The scarab is important because according to Egyptologists, these scarabs were only in circulation during his short reign of about eight years near the end of the fifteenth century B.C. when he was on the throne. While archaeologists have typically attributed this late fifteenth century B.C. destruction to a campaign of Pharaoh Thutmose III, as noted earlier, the city continued to be occupied following the reign of Thutmose III and was not destroyed until many years later.[17]

Besides chronology, what archaeological evidence could associate this particular destruction of Hazor with the conquest of the Israelites led by Joshua? A widespread destruction by fire at the city, destruction of temples and the possible desecration of cult statues, and a period of abandonment following the attack all suggest that the Israelites destroyed Hazor around 1400 B.C. The fire destruction, described in the book of Joshua, has already been noted as evident throughout the site from this period.[18] While most of the desecrated statues appear to come from the later c. 1200 B.C. destruction, the discovery of a cult statue which had been decapitated in the remains of a Canaanite temple could have been from the c. 1400 B.C. destruction of the city.[19] As Israelites were commanded in the Law of Moses to cut

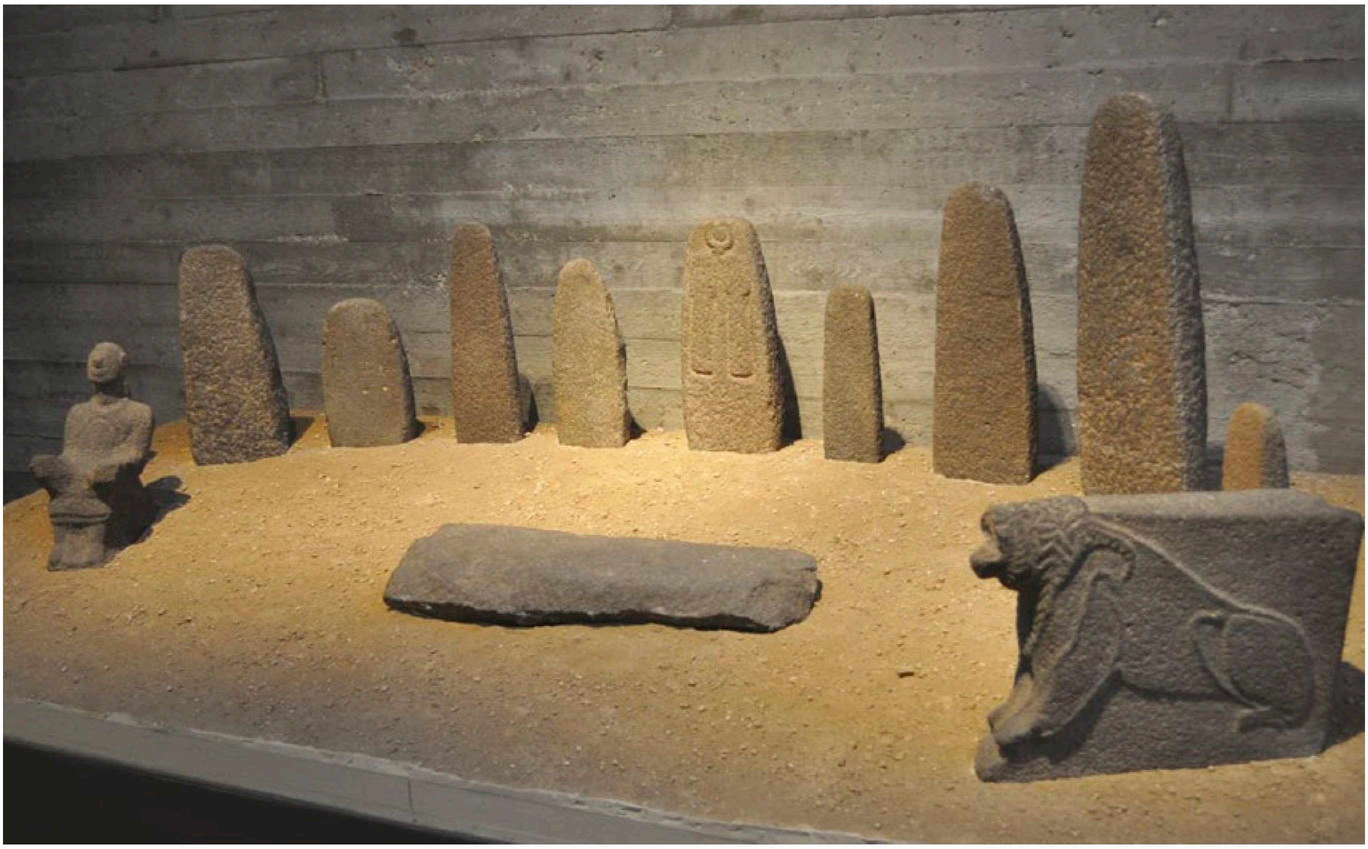
PHOTO: GARY WEBSTER

SHRINE OF THE STELAE. The 10 stele, the seated male statue, offering table and the lion orthostat, all made of basalt, form the cultic furniture of a small temple discovered in Hazor. The stelae, which are frequently interpreted as being associated with ancestor worship, are plain apart from the centre one, which depicts two hands raised toward a cresent and a disk, a symbol of the moon god Sin, suggesting that the shrine was dedicated to this god. The shrine was destroyed in the final conquest of Hazor by the Israelites in the late thirteenth century B.C.

down and obliterate the statues of pagan gods, in addition to pagan places of worship, they are a likely candidate for this action rather than the people of Canaan or Egypt who typically revered statues of deities.[20] Finally, investigation of the site, particularly examination of the pottery and build up of dirt between layers of the city, indicates a long period of abandonment between approximately 1400–1350 B.C. or later.[21] Curiously, Hazor is not mentioned again in Egyptian lists until just after 1300 B.C., and is also absent from reference in the Bible until the time of Deborah in the late thirteenth century B.C. The conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is that there is a match between the archaeological remains and the account from the book of Joshua in the chronology, manner of destruction and apparent abandonment of Hazor. Therefore, the first major destruction of Hazor in the Late Bronze Age I is likely to have been the third "conquest" of the city, brought about by the Israelites under Joshua.

Only the Israelites fit the requirements of manner of destruction in targeting temples and intentionally desecrating statues of gods and kings, military power, and interest in conquering Hazor at that time.

The second major destruction of Hazor came near the end of the Late Bronze Age II, just before 1200 B.C. While it is possible that Seti I placed Hazor on one of his conquest lists, there is no clear evidence for destruction of the city at that time and he may have merely subjugated it like Thutmose III appears to have done. After being destroyed just prior to 1400 B.C., the city of Hazor eventually recovered and reestablished itself as a powerful city-state. However, excavations of the final Canaanite city near the end of the thirteenth century B.C. revealed destruction and desecration, although apparently less extensive than the early destruction of the city. This attack on Hazor, occurring perhaps about 1210 B.C., is evidenced by the destruction of the main palace (or temple) by a massive fire, specific destruction of other temples in the city, intentional religious desecration of many statues of Canaanite and Egyptian gods and kings, and destruction of the gate to force entry into the city.[22] It has been argued that of the four potential destroyers of Hazor—the Sea Peoples (the Philistines etc.), other Canaanites, the Egyptians and the Israelites—only the Israelites fit the requirements of manner of destruction in targeting temples and intentionally desecrating statues of gods and kings, military power, and interest in conquering Hazor at that time.[23] Following yet another gap of occupation at the city due to destruction, Hazor was resettled by Israelites and then eventually rebuilt during the rule of Solomon.[24] Thus, the conquest of Canaanite Hazor by the Israelites under the leadership of Deborah could only be associated with the late thirteenth century B.C. destruction, and there is no surviving record of anyone else attacking the city around that time. This further suggests that the identity of the attackers who destroyed the final Canaanite city of Hazor near the end of the Late Bronze Age is the Israelite coalition led by Deborah and Barak.

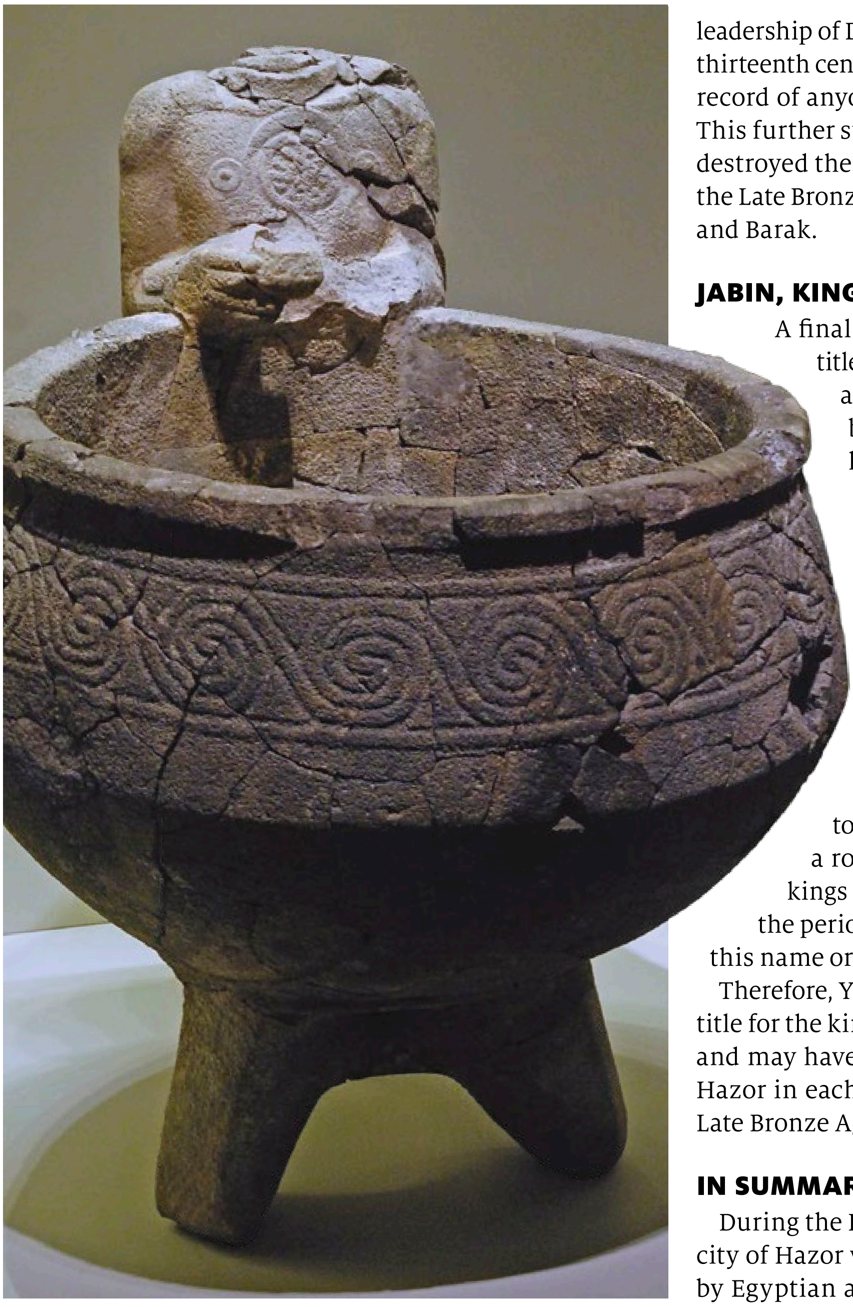
PHOTO: ALAMY—ZEV RADOVAN

RELIGIOUS BASIN. This basalt bowl, dated at somewhere between the fifteenth and thirteenth centries B.C., was found in the throne room of the Orthostat Temple at Hazor. It was shattered into fragments in a fire that destroyed the city. The basin suggests it was used in a religious rite of liquid offerings. The figure wears a pendant in the shape of a crescent with an eight-rayed star, symbols of a prominent deity of the time. However, there is no way of telling whether the statue represents a god or merely a ruler.

JABIN, KING OF HAZOR

A final issue to be addressed concerns the name or title "Yabin" (often rendered "Jabin" in translation), associated with the king of Hazor in the Bible books of Joshua and Judges. While scholars have made the suggestion that the Joshua and Judges accounts describe the same event, using their mention of the name "Yabin" to argue this hypothesis, a careful reading makes it clear that the attack on and destruction of Hazor led by Joshua, and the battle and attack on Hazor led by Deborah and Barak, are two separate events divided in time by almost 200 years. Why, then, is Yabin king of Hazor mentioned in both Hebrew accounts? Further investigations and discoveries relating to this issue have revealed that Yabin was likely a royal *dynastic* name or title for the Canaanite kings of Hazor.[25] Two ancient cuneiform tablets from the period of Canaanite rule at Hazor reveal the use of this name or title in association with the kings of Hazor.[26] Therefore, Yabin was probably merely an adopted name or title for the king of Hazor, preserved through the centuries, and may have been used as a designation for the ruler of Hazor in each of the five possible conquests through the Late Bronze Age.

IN SUMMARY

During the Late Bronze Age, the important and powerful city of Hazor was attacked and conquered up to five times by Egyptian and the Israelite assailants. All five of these conquests are recorded in ancient accounts, but only two are attested to in the archaeological record, indicating that only two of the conquests inflicted significant damage on the city and its residents.

Nation	*Leader*	*Time*	*Type*
1. Egyptians	Pharaoh Thutmose III	Early 15th century B.C.	Subjugation
2. Egyptians	Pharaoh Amenhotep II	Mid 15th century B.C.	Subjugation*
3. Israelites	Joshua son of Nun	End of 15th century B.C.	Destruction
4. Egyptians	Pharaoh Seti I	Early 13th century B.C.	Subjugation (tentative)
5. Israelites	Deborah and Barak	End of 13th century B.C.	Destruction

* This particular list of Amenhotep II may have merely been a copy of that of Thutmose III. Amenhotep II may not have gone on his own extensive military campaign.

The archaeological record indicates that the city of Hazor, though massive and well-fortified, was constantly under threat of attack. During the Late Bronze Age, it experienced defeat at least four times, culminating in a conclusive destruction at the end of the period, from which it never recovered. Although Hazor was resettled and continued in a degree of prominence through the Israelite Monarchy period, sparse activity appears following the Assyrian destruction. The city had finally been abandoned and became a "haunt of jackals."[27] ◆

ENDNOTES

1. W Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1992), p 22, 148, 227, 228 and 364; Joshua 11:10. The Amarna Letters were exchanges between Canaanite rulers and the Egyptian administration during the Late Bronze Age.
2. A Ben-Tor, "Hazor," *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1993), p 595.
3. S Ahituv, *Canaanite Toponyms in Ancient Egyptian Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), pp 116, 17. Thutmose III and Amenhotep II would have attacked Hazor prior to c. 1440 B.C., while if Seti I attacked the city, it would have been just prior to c. 1290 B.C.
4. M G Hasel, *Domination and Resistance: Egyptian Military Activity in the Southern Levant, Ca. 1300-1185 B.C.* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp 138, 139.
5. Joshua 11:1–13; Judges 4:2–24.
6. http://unixware.mscc.huji.ac.il/~hatsor/2001.htm
7. Late Bronze Age I is approximately 1550–1400 B.C, while Late Bronze Age II is approximately 1400–1200 B.C.
8. D Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton, 1992), p 158.
9. J Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, Third Edition (Princeton: Princeton, 1969), p 242.
10. Joshua 11:11.
11. Judges 4:24.
12. This chronology begins with the established date of Solomon c. 970 B.C and utilises chronological information in 1 Kings 6:1, Exodus 16:35, Judges 11:26, Joshua 14:10, Judges 3:8–14, Judges 3:30 and Judges 4:3.
13. J Garstang, *Joshua–Judges*, reprint of 1931 edition (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1978), pp 197, 198.
14. Y Yadin, "Further light on biblical Hazor," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, vol 20, no 2 (1957), pp 33–47.
15. Y Yadin, *Hazor: The Rediscovery of a Great Citadel of the Bible* (New York: Random House, 1975), pp 115, 126, 127, 139, 141; Y Yadin, "The fourth season of excavations at Hazor," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, vol 22, no 1 (1959), pp 1–20; A Ben-Tor, "News and notes," *Israel Exploration Journal*, vol 51 (2001), p 238; A Ben-Tor et al, *Hazor V: An Account of the Fifth Season of Excavation* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1997), pp 102, 382; http://unixware.mscc.huji.ac.il/~hatsor/2000.htm; http://unixware.mscc.huji.ac.il/~hatsor/2001.htm.
16. Yadin, 1975, p 64.
17. A Ben-Tor, 2001, p 238. For recent suggestions that the fifteenth century B.C. destruction at Hazor is connected to the Israelite conquest led by Joshua compare, B Wood, "From Ramesses to Shiloh: Archaeological discoveries bearing on the Exodus–Judges period," D M Howard, Jr, and M A Grisanti (ed), *Giving the Sense: Understanding and Using Old Testament Historical Texts* (Grand Rapids: Kregal, 2003) pp 256–282; D Petrovich, "The dating of Hazor's destruction in Joshua 11," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* vol 51, no 3 (2008), pp 489–512.
18. Joshua 11:11
19. Yadin, 1975, p 102.
20. Deuteronomy 12:2, 3; Numbers 33:52, etc.
21. Y Yadin, *Hazor II: An Account of the Second Season of Excavations*. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1960), p 153.
22. A Ben-Tor and M T Rubiato, "Excavating Hazor, part two: Did the Israelites destroy the Canaanite City?" *Biblical Archaeology Review*, vol 25, no 3 (1999), pp 22–39; A Ben-Tor, "The sad fate of statues and the mutilated statues of Hazor," S Gitin, J E Wright, J P Dessel (ed), *Confronting the Past: Archaeological and Historical Essays on Ancient Israel in Honor of William G. Dever* (Eisenbrauns, 2006), p 14; S Zuckerman, "Anatomy of a destruction: Crisis architecture, termination rituals and the fall of Canaanite Hazor," *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* vol 20, no 1 (2007), pp 3–32; V Fritz, "Conquest or settlement? The early Iron Age in Palestine," *The Biblical Archaeologist*, vol 50, no 2 (1987), pp 84–100; Y Yadin, 1975, p 35, 43, 52, 53, 94, 140; http://unixware.mscc.huji.ac.il/~hatsor/1994.htm; http://unixware.mscc.huji.ac.il/~hatsor/1995.htm.
23. A Ben-Tor and M T Rubiato, 1999, p 38; K Kitchen, "Hazor and Egypt: An egyptological and ancient Near-Eastern perspective," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*, vol 16, no 2 (2002), pp 309–313.
24. http://unixware.mscc.huji.ac.il/~hatsor/1995.htm
25. Yadin, 1975, p 250.
26. K Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), p 175; B Janeway, "Hazor 2002.," *Bible and Spade* vol 16, no 3 (2003), pp 92–96. Additionally, there appears to be mention of "Qishon of Jabin" (a location near Hazor) on an Egyptian place name list from the Late Bronze Age.
27. Jeremiah 49:33.

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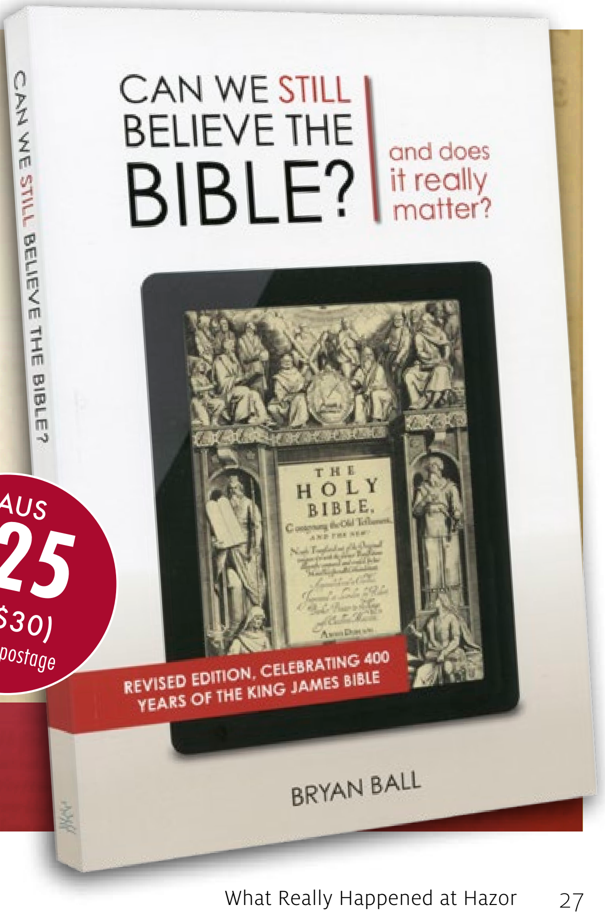
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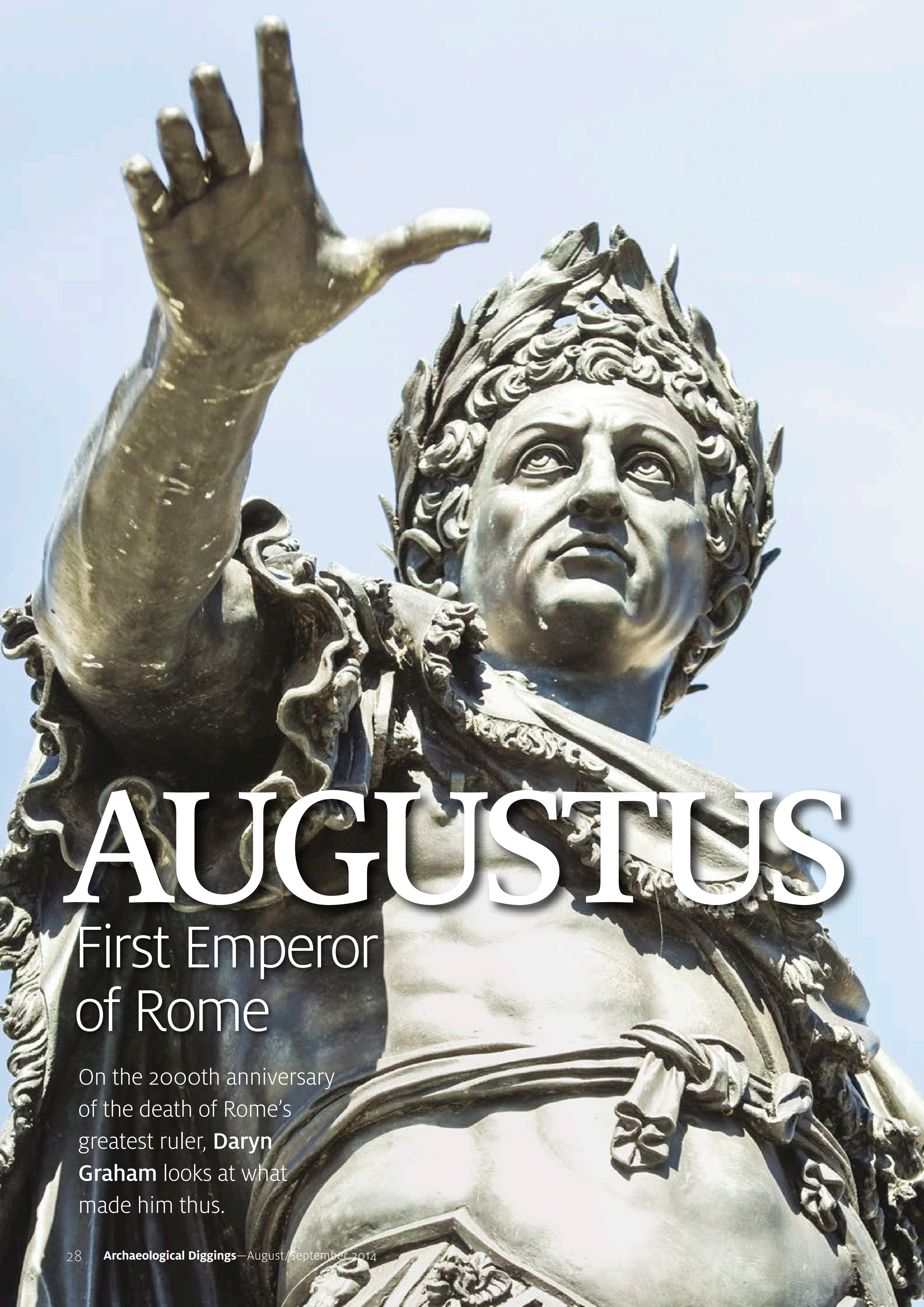

AUGUSTUS

First Emperor of Rome

On the 2000th anniversary of the death of Rome's greatest ruler, **Daryn Graham** looks at what made him thus.

OFF THE WEST COAST OF GREECE NEAR ACTIUM, TWO OF Rome's mightiest-ever leaders faced off aboard their respective flagships in the midst of the two hostile naval squadrons. One fleet was commanded by Marc Antony and his wife, Cleopatra, and the other by Octavian, better known by his later moniker, Augustus Caesar. The date was the September 2, 31 B.C.

The Battle of Actium was without doubt monumental; a turning point in Rome's history. When Antony and Cleopatra's fleet was outmanoeuvred by Octavian's admirals, and Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide soon after, Octavian was left as sole ruler of the expansive Roman world. He would not let that opportunity pass without full exploitation.

Octavian shot to prominence as a young man when he was adopted and made heir and beneficiary by his uncle, the great Roman general Julius Caesar. When Julius Caesar was assassinated on March 15, 44 B.C., the young Octavian inherited his adoptive father's fortune and fame. Soon after that, the deceased Julius Caesar was voted divine honours, and Octavian began to proudly publicise himself as the son of a god. From that point, Octavian kept pace with his enormous prestige. Together with Antony, who had served under Julius Caesar, Octavian pursued Caesar's assassins and at two great battles at Philippi in Macedonia, on October 3 and 23, 42 B.C., carried off two resounding victories, cementing his place in power and avenging his adoptive father in the process.

But Octavian and Antony's celebrations were short-lived. Both were ambitious for power and had learned well under the tutelage of Julius Caesar the methods of force in achieving one's aims. Antony, for one, wanted to conquer the world and in 38 B.C. launched an invasion of the Parthian empire, the swathe of land extending from the Euphrates to the Indus river. It was a bold enterprise, which needed a lot of preparation, so Antony had to arrange matters in Rome's eastern allied states so as not to invite sedition while he was campaigning in Parthia. It was then that he encountered Cleopatra, queen of Egypt.

But Antony's campaign was a dismal failure and as Antony's military reputation slipped, Octavian saw a chance to make his own bid for power. But not over the Parthian Empire; Octavian set his sights on the entire Roman world! Consequently, when Rome heard of Antony's failure in the East, Octavian immediately began to style himself as the true leader of the West. In this he had the support of his wife, Livia. She made a concerted effort to appear to all as the paragon of Roman matronly virtue, wearing simple traditional clothing in public and taking up weaving—the work of a humble Roman.

Their efforts yielded success. Sensing a leader who might extend their own needs and agendas, Rome's western provinces voluntarily swore their allegiance to him and the Roman Senate pledged him its support as well. Octavian pressed home his political advantage and attacked Antony and Cleopatra (now Antony's wife) for their distasteful Eastern habits in the Roman Senate. Conditions deteriorated fast and both sides finally faced off near Actium. Octavian, who won the battle there, was now the most powerful man in the entire Mediterranean world.

But Octavian had learned not to flaunt his power. That had, after all, been the cause of Julius Caesar's demise, which ended in his assassination. Octavian often said that his power was like that of any other Roman senator and it was his personal influence only (something the Romans termed *auctoritas*) that set him apart. As the poet Ovid would later write, "Caesar Augustus is the state" (*Tristia*, 4. 4. 13–16.) However, that's not to say that Octavian had no power position at all. He most certainly did. In fact, he held the office of consul, the Senate's highest office, and he also held the power of the Roman people's tribune and technically could veto on behalf of the Roman people (and therefore, in practice, his own interests) any decision made by the Senate.

Octavian proved himself equal to his powers. On January 13, 27 B.C., he convened the Senate and after delivering a

AUGUSTUS. The finely-detailed bronze statue of the Rome's first emperor stands above the fountain at the Augsburg City Hall, in Germany. Produced in 1594, the statue was designed to commerate the founder of the city, which under the orders of Augustus in 15 B.C., was established as a military camp. Being at the junction of the Lech and Wertach Rivers, it soon became the capital of the Roman province of Raetia.

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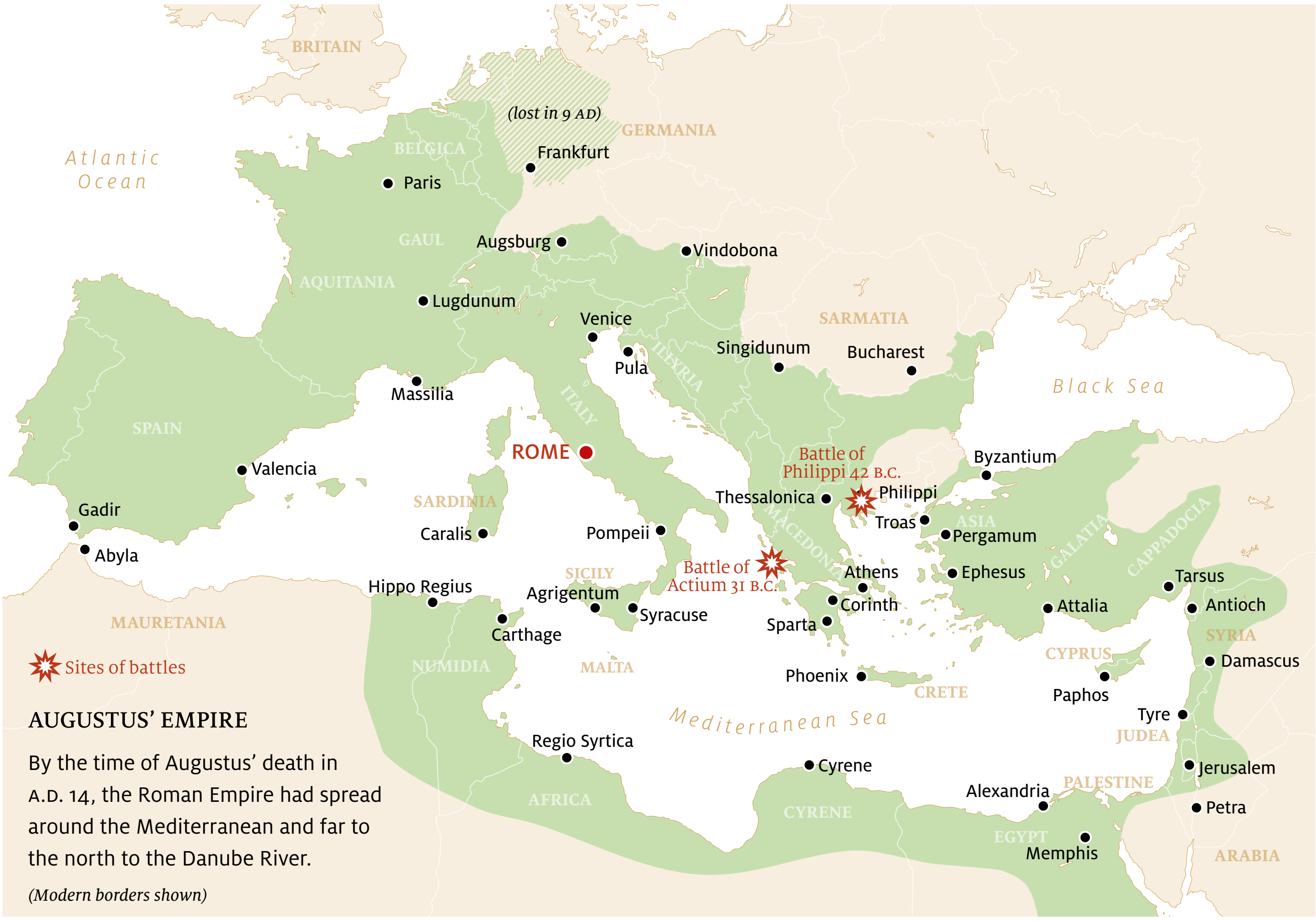
BRITAIN
(lost in 9 AD)
GERMANIA
Atlantic Ocean
BELGICA
Frankfurt
Paris
GAUL
Augsburg
Vindobona
AQUITANIA
Lugdunum
Venice
SARMATIA
Pula
Singidunum
Bucharest
ILLYRIA
Massilia
ITALY
Black Sea
SPAIN
ROME
Battle of Philippi 42 B.C.
Byzantium
Valencia
SARDINIA
Thessalonica
Philippi
Gadir
Caralis
Pompeii
Troas
ASIA
Pergamum
MACEDONIA
GALATIA
CAPPADOCIA
Abyla
Battle of Actium 31 B.C.
Athens
Ephesus
Tarsus
SICILY
Hippo Regius
Agrigentum
Syracuse
Corinth
Attalia
Antioch
MAURETANIA
Carthage
Sparta
SYRIA
CYPRUS
Damascus
Sites of battles
NUMIDIA
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Tyre
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Cyrene
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PALESTINE
Petra
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CYRENE
EGYPT
Memphis
ARABIA

AUGUSTUS' EMPIRE

By the time of Augustus' death in A.D. 14, the Roman Empire had spread around the Mediterranean and far to the north to the Danube River.

(Modern borders shown)

MAP: SHANE WINFIELD

speech, laid down all his political positions, transferring them back to the Senate. It was a bold gesture, but it was thoroughly staged and the Senate immediately begged him to return to his former powers and offering him a new name, one worthy of a leader, the Senate and the people: the majesterial *Augustus*.

But just four years on, Augustus lay on his deathbed. Or so he thought. He had taken seriously ill and thought he was on the point of death. Up to that time he hadn't really thought about establishing a dynasty, or even providing a successor, but when he eventually recovered, this began to change. Over time, a series of successors were prepped by Augustus to take over upon his death. When eventually he did die some decades later in A.D. 14, the last in that series of protégés, Tiberius, inherited Augustus' position and fortune, becoming his replacement as *princeps,* or emperor.

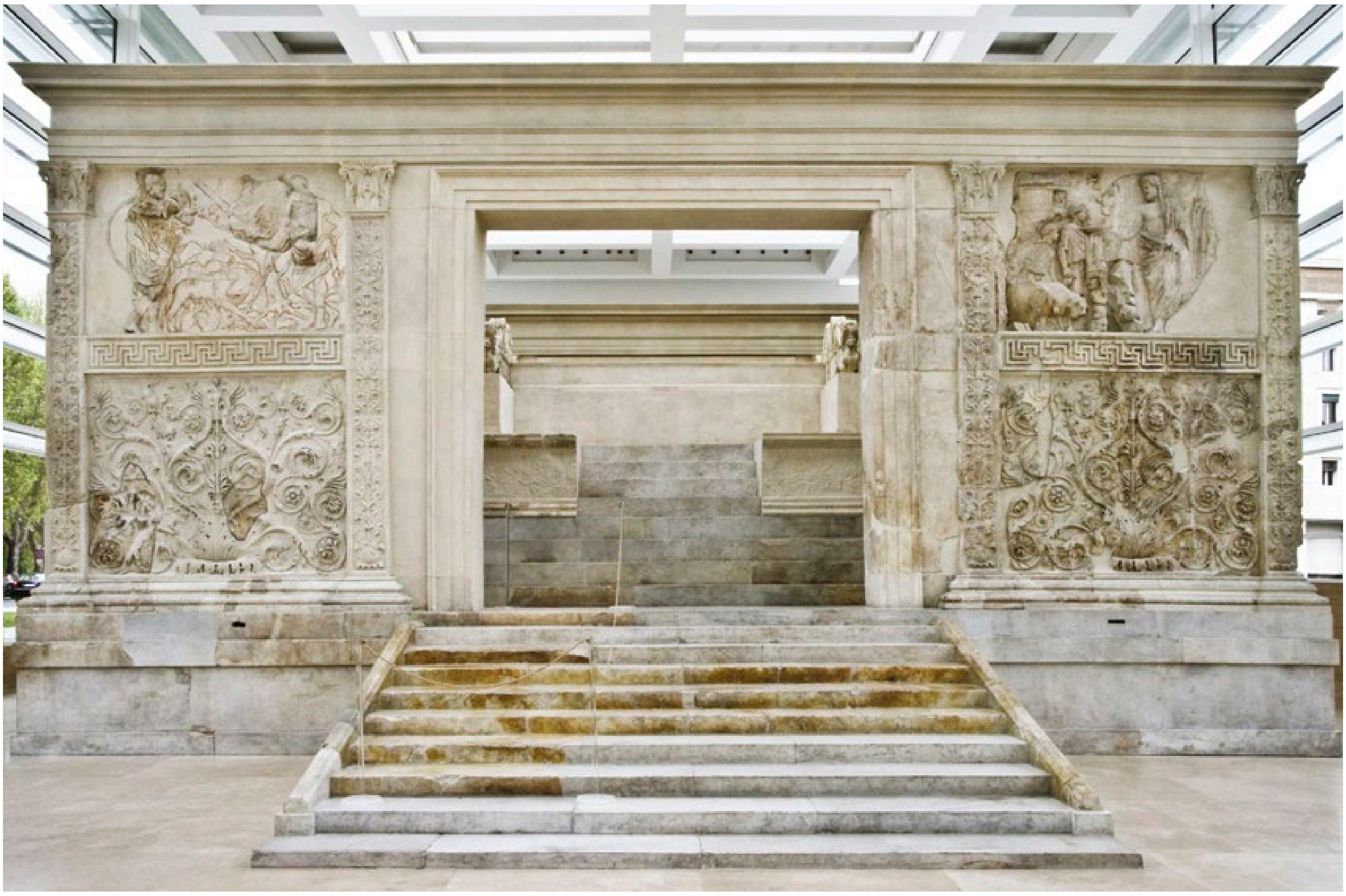
He chose well; the long rule of Augustus marks the apogee of Roman rule and culture. Through force of arms, Roman culture spread. Under Augustus, the empire spread right around the Mediterranean, north up to the Danube River where the territory of modern-day Germany was temporarily added to his rule. Eventually, Latin became fashionable among provincial elites who wanted to advance in power in a Roman world and Roman dress and tastes became the norm among the upper echelons of society. The civil peace he then ushered in—the *Pax Romana*—allowed the flourishing of the arts and literature, trade and industry, as he was able to persuade the citizenry, military and rulers that there was greater economic wealth to be had from peace than from conquest and plunder. As Roman historian, Tacitus, wrote a century later, "Augustus gave us the instructions under which we gain use of peace—and a princeps" (Tacitus, *Annals,* 3. 28).

AUGUSTUS' ROME

Naturally, the city of Rome grew fat on its wealth and Augustus was keen to channel that wealth to appropriate infrastructure endeavours. The city was decorated with marble, temples and other public buildings were restored sumptuously, the urban sprawl was extended to such an extent that Rome became the equal and then, superior to any city in the world.

The key to all this success, Augustus knew, was to use what already exists in new and innovative ways. Rome's poets and writers could see all this in action for themselves and Ovid likened the Augustan era not to an end or a beginning but as a metamorphosis. For Ovid and Roman historian, Livy, Augustus' reign was the culmination of all that had gone before in both myth and human history.

Augustus took full advantage of the spirit of the times and encouraged the Romans' sense of patriotism to the full. But he also tied it to himself: to be loyal to Rome was synonymous with loyalty to Augustus. Livia, too, played a role in this, overseeing the tending of the sacred hearth of Rome's Vestal Virgins in the palace. Her role as loyal and cooperative wife to Augustus served as model for all Rome's women and a means of sustaining civil concord in Rome itself. But Augustus went further than mere symbols. It became law that any insult to himself as emperor of Rome or his family was an act of treason against the state, with harsh penalties such as exile, imprisonment or worse. This



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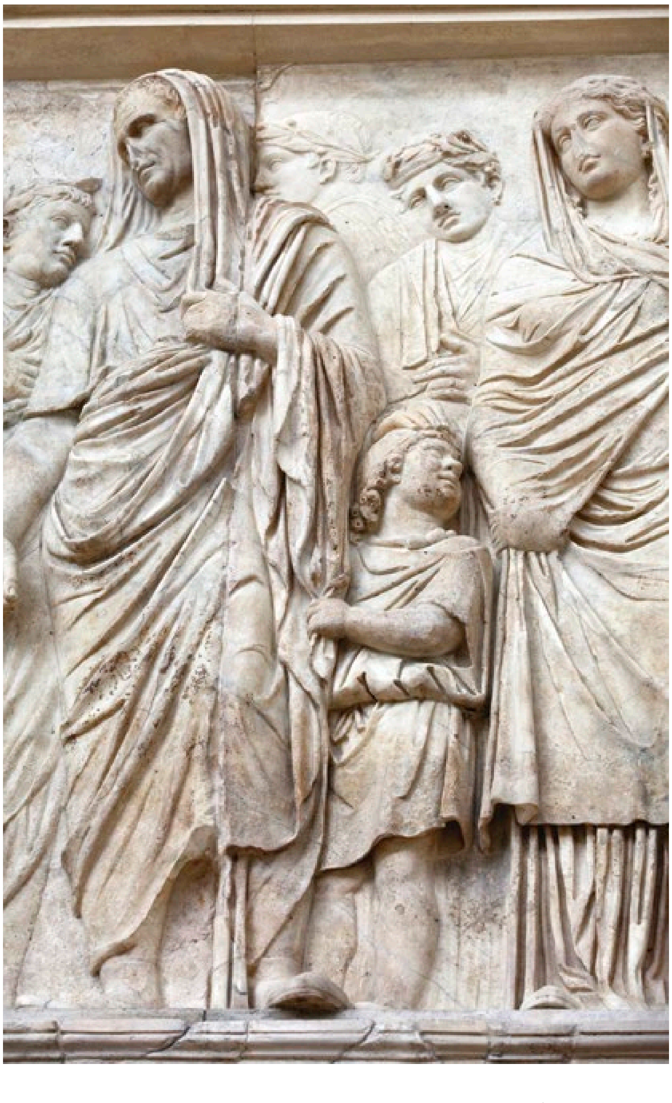
THE ARA PACIS, meaning "Altar of Peace," commissioned by the Roman Senate in 13 B.C. and completed in A.D. 9, was to honour the return of Augustus after he had established control over the strategic alpine passes of northern of Italy. For centuries, the *Ara Pacis* was lost to civilisation, only rediscovered and rebuilt in 1938.

DETAILS ON THE ARA PACIS. Agrippa, Augustus' son-in-law, wearing a toga to cover his head, is followed in procession by his son, Gaius, holding his robe, and the most prominent of Roman women, Livia, Augustus' wife.

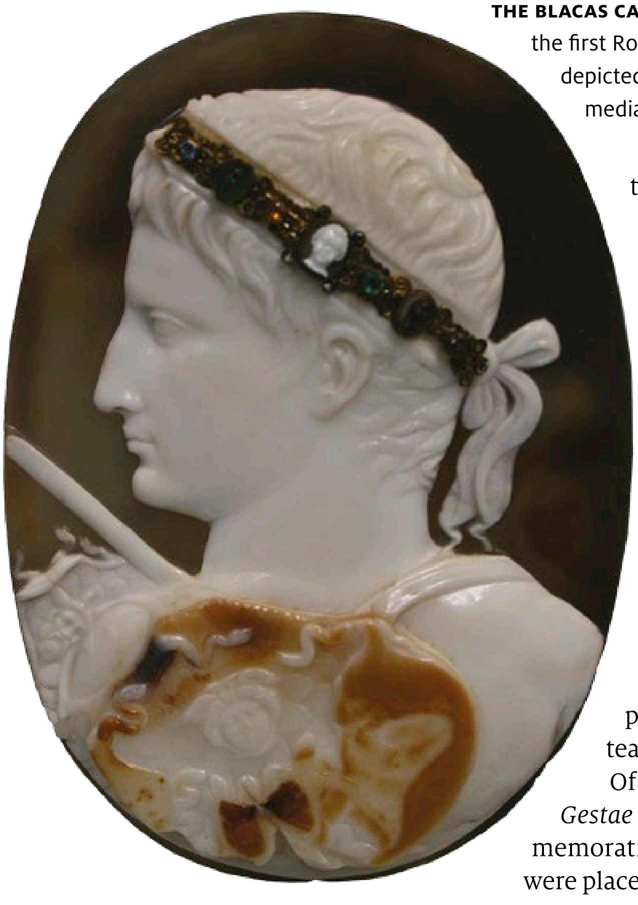


political development is clearly reflected on the reliefs of Augustus' *Ara Pacis,* the "Altar of Peace." Excavated by Italian archaeologists on the orders of Mussolini in 1937, the altar was originally inaugurated in Rome on July 4, 13 B.C. Around it are reliefs depicting a procession of senators on one side and the imperial family on the other. These two groups are opposed, yet they stand together as equal.

It was Augustus' wider family that wielded the lion's share of power in Rome, as can be seen in the building of the temple of Mars Ultor in Augustus' new Forum in Rome. Inaugurated in 2 B.C. with fanfare and celebration, the temple would serve as the ceremonial staging point for all of Rome's future foreign wars. Generals would leave for war from that temple amidst pomp and festivity and the first to be seen off from it was Augustus' own grandson, Gaius, at the inauguration of the temple itself. The object of his march was an old adversary: the Parthian Empire. Apparently dreams of world domination still inspired the emperor, but now he wanted his dynasty, not just himself, to realise those dreams for themselves. Thus, he sent Gaius to conquer the world. But, like Antony's Parthian campaign, Gaius' venture

PHOTO: VIACHESLAV LOPATIN—SHUTTERSTOCK

THE FORUM OF AUGUSTUS. During the Battle of Philippi in 42 B.C., Augustus, then known as Octavian, vowed to build a temple honouring Mars, the Roman god of war. After winning the battle with the help of Marc Antony and avenging the assassination of his adoptive father Julius Caesar, he built the new Forum, finishing it in 2 B.C. and naming it after himself.



THE BLACAS CAMEO. This 12.8-cm-tall exquisite cameo, a fragment of a larger portrait, depicts the first Roman emperor, Augustus. Handcrafted not long after his death, it originally depicted Augustus wearing a laurel wreath, but this was replaced, probably in the mediaeval period, with the current setting of jewels.

PHOTO: MIKE PEEL—WWW.MIKEPEEL.NET

turned to failure when he died in the east soon after arrival. This was an obvious blow to Augustus' plans. But worse was to come. In A.D. 6, Rome's occupying force in Germany was wiped out in a single stroke by Germanic forces in what is today known as the "Varian disaster," so named after Quinctilius Varus, the Roman general who perished with his three legions in the fight. Augustus wisely took heed of these reversals, perceiving the risks to his dominions. In his last year, he instructed his heir and successor, Tiberius, the son of his wife, Livia, from her previous marriage, not to attempt further expansion of the empire. In typical Augustan style, the emperor recognised his limits as Rome's limits.

AUGUSTUS' LEGACY

On August 19, A.D. 14, Augustus died, aged 77. And soon thereafter the Senate awarded him divine honours, and his wife, Livia, who survived him 15 years until her own death at age 86, was made chief priestess of his cult. Even in death, this formidable husband-and-wife team ruled the hearts and minds of Romans.

Of course, that is not so obvious when one reads Augustus' memoir, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* ("Accomplishments of the Divine Augustus"), where commemorative epitaph-cum-autobiographical funerary inscriptions of Augustus were placed in Roman temples around the empire soon after his death. A number

PHOTO: DREAMSTIME.COM

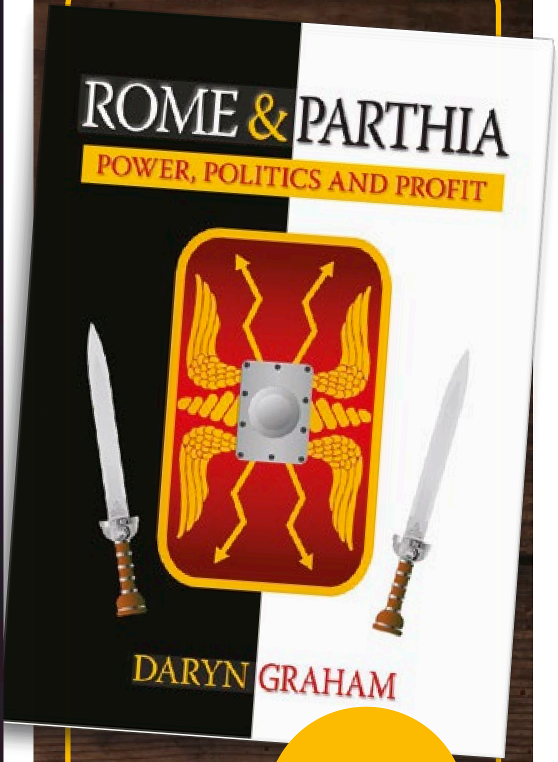
AUGUSTUS OF PRIMA PORTA. This statue, believed to have been made in A.D. 15, is of an eternally youthful Augustus. It was discovered at Livia's personal villa at Prima Porta.

have survived, including an almost full copy written in the original Latin, along with a Greek translation, preserved on a temple to Augustus—the *Monumentum Ancyranum*—at Ancyra (in modern Ankara, Turkey).

Interestingly, *Res Gestae* includes no mention at all of good wife Livia. However, to be fair, we should remember that political achievement was the exclusive domain of men in ancient Rome. Politics was a paternalistic pursuit and women had no part in it, not even being allowed to vote. Augustus put distance between himself and his politically supportive wife when it came to documenting his political career for posterity.

But a team Augustus and Livia certainly were. On April 20, 1863, a beautiful marble statue of Augustus was unearthed at what was once Livia's private villa at Prima Porta, near Rome. It depicts Augustus as he looked when he was a young Octavian—a proud, virile and earnest warlord. Now on display in the Vatican Museum, the statue portrays the man Livia fell in love with, a sign of the devotion of a wife for her husband. But if Augustus was eternally young in Livia's mind and imagination, Rome and the entire Roman world had moved into middle-age and had changed forever—changed so much so that when Augustus died, the question on everybody's lips was not, "What now?" but rather, "Who will be emperor now?" That privilege fell to Livia's son, Tiberius, as mentioned.

This was Augustus' legacy to Rome—a dynasty. He had earned the right to bequeath thanks to his great victory at Actium, a legacy that would last as long as emperors ruled Rome. ◆



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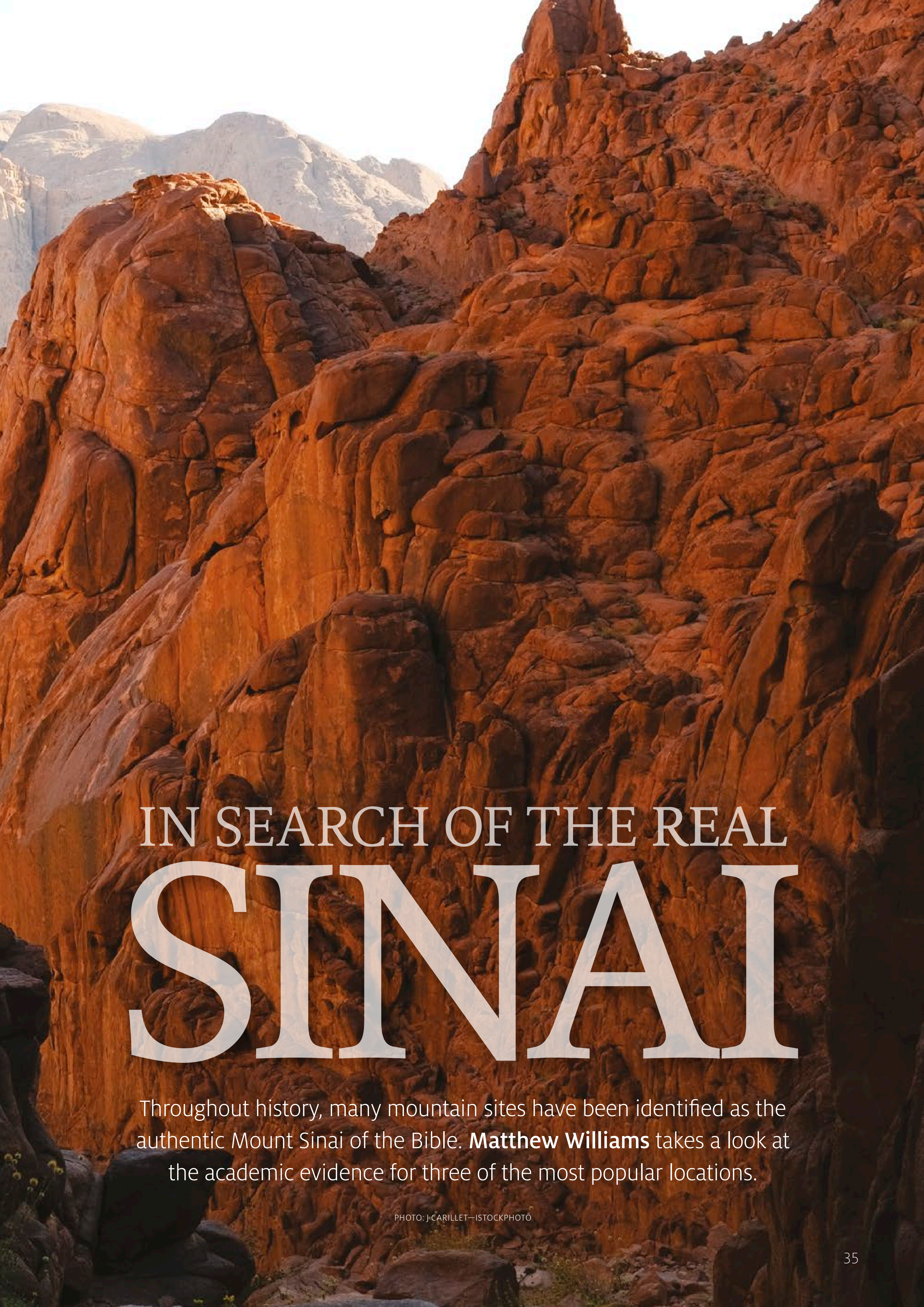
* Reviewed by DIGGINGS, Vol. 20 No. 5

STEPS OF PENITENCE. Hikers descending Jebel Musa, the traditional Mount Sinai, following one of two primary routes. The mountain, associated with Moses and the Ten Commandments, is a popular destination for religious and secular visitors alike, but is it the real Mount Sinai?



IN SEARCH OF THE REAL SINAI

Throughout history, many mountain sites have been identified as the authentic Mount Sinai of the Bible. **Matthew Williams** takes a look at the academic evidence for three of the most popular locations.

PHOTO: J-CARILLET—ISTOCKPHOTO

WATCHING THE MAJESTIC SUNSET RISING ABOVE THE DESERT MOUNTAINS of Sinai is an experience that captivates any adventure seeker. But for the pilgrim, the thought of standing where that charismatic Israelite leader and sage of ancient times, Moses, stood when he received the Ten Commandments from Yahweh, resonates deeply. Thus, over the past 1500 years, thousands of people from the world over have made the pilgrimage to the Sinai peninsula—all to climb the famed Mount Sinai and experience a piece of biblical history. Moses Mountain or *Jebel Musa* as it is known in Arabic, is the central Sinai mountain, 2285 m (7497 ft) above sea level, towering over St Catherine's Monastery, to which the tourists flock. The monastery was founded by the emperor Justinian in A.D. 527 in honour of St Catherine, a Christian martyr who was tortured and beheaded in Alexandria in A.D. 307.

So since the early fourth century A.D., it has been believed that Jebel Musa was the very mountain that Moses ascended to receive the Ten Commandments.

In 2012, I visited Jebel Musa and slept on the mountain top, totally alone. I carried 15 kg of baggage, including food, water, camera and sleeping gear, up one of two routes to the summit. It took me just under two hours to climb the Siket El Bashait path to the summit, then I descended via the steeper Siket Sayidna Musa trail, with its 3750 "steps of penitence." Throughout the night I could hear the sound of jets as they flew above me, while drifting up to me came the voices of people from the camp at the base of the mountain.

The scene at sunrise was mesmerising and is probably the most majestic sight I've ever experienced. It is like that for everyone, including those disturbed from comfortable beds in nearby hotels at 4 am, who brave the elements and darkness to ascend the mountain to witness the desert dawn, some almost ecstatic in their fervour for the experience.

But, would it diminish their experience to know that this mountain top, with its quaint little chapel and parapets, may not really be the mountain upon which Moses stood to receive the precious Commandments, with thundering clouds enveloping him and the rocks quaking? And is the plain below really where more than a million newly freed slaves camped, faithlessly awaiting his return? Is this pilgrimage site really the place where God met humankind?

In fact, through history, some 14 such mountain sites have been identified as the authentic Sinai of the Bible.[1] And the quest to identify the elusive mountain has driven adventurers and treasure seekers to search all over the Middle East in an Indiana Jones-style exploration. In order to find the most probable mountain amongst the most probable contenders, I will focus on just three of the more popular locations: Jebel Al-Lawz, in Saudi Arabia; Jebel Musa, in southern Sinai; and Hashem el-Tarif, in central Sinai.

Jebel Al-Lawz, a relatively recent contender, is part of the "Midianite hypothesis," which claims that Mount Sinai is in north-western Saudi Arabia. None less than Frank Moore Cross supports this theory, on the basis of both the biblical text and archaeology. Archaeologically, there is an absence of material remains in the Sinai Peninsula in the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age (the traditional dating of the Exodus). This is in contrast to abundant material evidence of thriving Bedouin settlements in the Midianite territory of Saudi Arabia during the same period. However, Cross himself is noncommittal about Jebel Al-Lawz itself being "the Mount Sinai."[2a] The site of Jebel Al-Lawz as the Mount Sinai has been made popular through the claims made by adventure seekers, such as Ron Wyatt, and strongly advocated on websites, including that of *The Interactive Bible.* And because of the popularity of this website, we will investigate it on its merits.[2b]

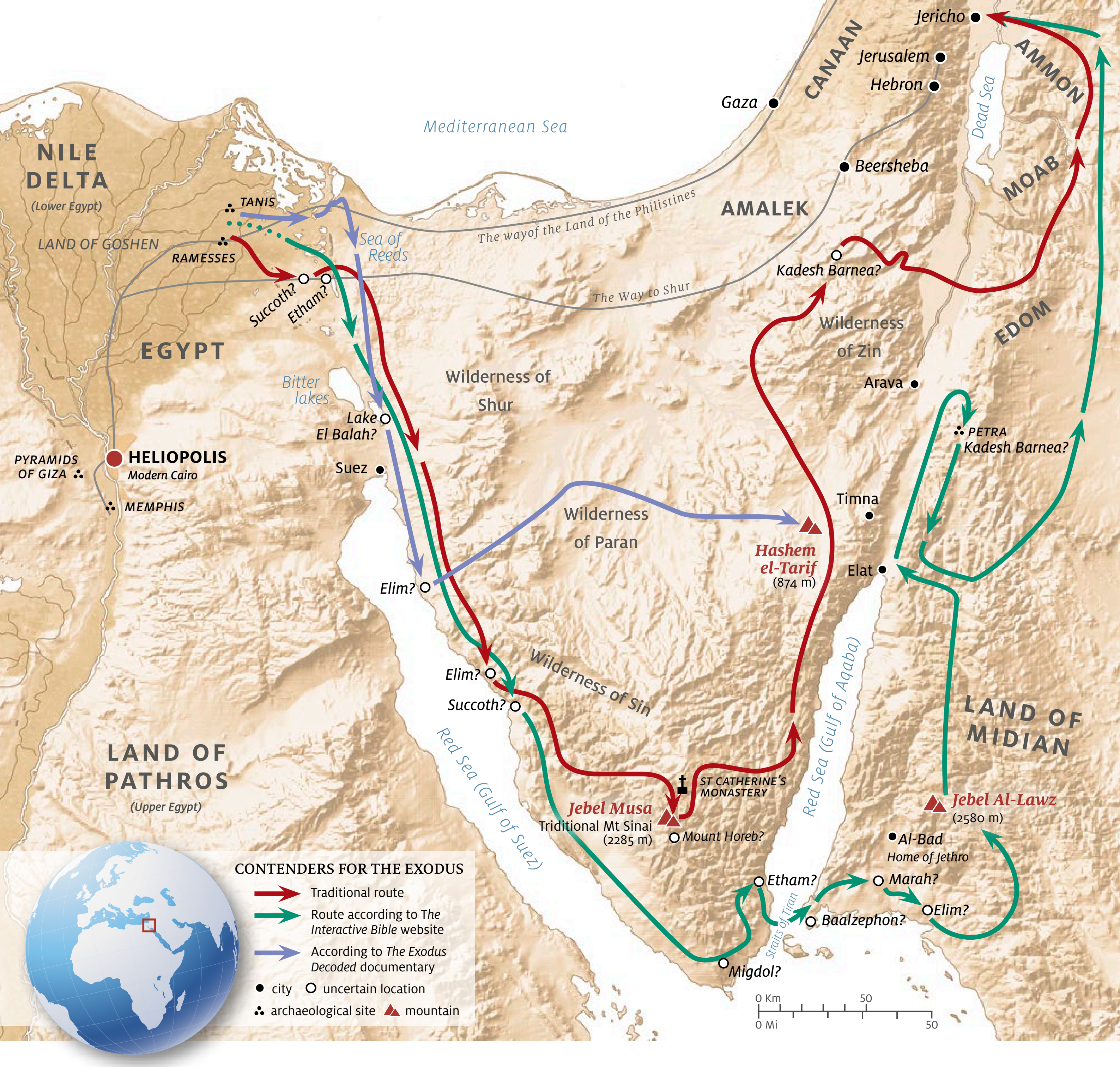
Jebel Musa is the traditionally favoured site and Hashem el-Tarif was made famous through the 2006 documentary *The Exodus Decoded.* Focusing attention on these three mountains allows for a broad analysis of three different geographical regions across Egypt and the Middle East. This will allow us to zero in on the geographical proximity of where the mountain should be, and once we can agree in principle on the location, then we can "haggle over price."

THE FOUR MARKERS OF EXODUS

The process begins with a focus on four geographical indicators or markers from the biblical text and an evaluation of the relative strengths and weaknesses of each location. First, however, we must recognise the limitations of this article: this is not an exhaustive study and doesn't include all of the evidence for each option. Rather, this is an overview, knowing that the Exodus routes for each of the three Mount Sinai locations are not universally accepted.

1. Land of Goshen

The three locations follow three distinct routes for the Exodus to their alleged "Mount Sinai." Both the Jebel Al-Lawz and Jebel Musa mountain locations assume a southern Sinai route out of Egypt, whilst Hashem el-Tarif proposes a central Sinai route (see map, page 37). But they are all consistent in their origin—the land of Goshen in the Nile Delta. The Bible, in Numbers 33:5 and Exodus 12:37, calls this area the land of "Rameses," and modern scholarship agrees that this land of Rameses is synonymous with the land of Goshen. Additionally, the Land of Goshen itself is near the well-known site of Qantir, in the eastern part of the Delta.


NILE DELTA
(Lower Egypt)
LAND OF GOSHEN
TANIS
RAMESSES
Succoth?
Etham?
EGYPT
Sea of Reeds
Mediterranean Sea
The wayof the Land of the Philistines
The Way to Shur
Bitter lakes
Lake El Balah?
Suez
PYRAMIDS OF GIZA
HELIOPOLIS
Modern Cairo
MEMPHIS
Wilderness of Shur
Wilderness of Paran
Elim?
Elim?
Succoth?
Wilderness of Sin
LAND OF PATHROS
(Upper Egypt)
Red Sea (Gulf of Suez)
Jebel Musa
Triditional Mt Sinai
(2285 m)
ST CATHERINE'S MONASTERY
Mount Horeb?
Hashem el-Tarif
(874 m)
Gaza
CANAAN
Jericho
Jerusalem
Hebron
Dead Sea
AMMON
Beersheba
AMALEK
MOAB
Kadesh Barnea?
Wilderness of Zin
EDOM
Arava
PETRA
Kadesh Barnea?
Timna
Elat
Red Sea (Gulf of Aqaba)
LAND OF MIDIAN
Jebel Al-Lawz
(2580 m)
Al-Bad
Home of Jethro
Etham?
Marah?
Straits of Tiran
Baalzephon?
Elim?
Migdol?
0 Km
50
0 Mi
50
CONTENDERS FOR THE EXODUS
Traditional route
Route according to The Interactive Bible website
According to The Exodus Decoded documentary
city
uncertain location
archaeological site
mountain

2. Succoth

After leaving Egypt, the Bible states that the Israelites went to a place called Succoth.[3] This will be the second of four places that we will geographically locate in order to gain a better understanding of the likely location of a possible Mount Sinai. As you will see on the map, those who believe Mount Sinai should be located at Jebel Al-Lawz in Saudi Arabia[4] place Succoth in a completely different place to those who believe Jebel Musa is Mount Sinai.[5] The creators of *The Exodus Decoded,* who assert that Hashem el-Tarif is the genuine Mount Sinai, fail to posit a plausible location for Succoth.

Locating Succoth in the Sinai Peninsula

The Interactive Bible website bases the location of Succoth on the meaning of its Hebrew name, meaning "block, stop the approach, shut off or cover."[6] It claims Succoth received this name because it was where the Egyptians were prevented from approaching the Israelites before they crossed the Red Sea.[7] It places Succoth approximately 120 km (80 miles) south of the Port of Suez and 160 km (100 miles) distant from the Straits of Tiran.[8] They believe Succoth must be located in the Sinai Peninsula, because if it were to be placed at a nearer location to Egypt, it couldn't fulfil the criteria of being located in a wilderness, based on the Bible references of Exodus 14:1–12 and Judges 11:16. Ultimately, however, they admit that its exact location is unknown, placing their argument on a speculative rather than factual footing, being the interpretation of the meaning of its name.

Locating Succoth at Tjeku

Kenneth Kitchen, professor emeritus of Egyptology at the School of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology, at the University of Liverpool, England, and an expert on the

MAP: ARID OCEAN—SHUTTERSTOCK

THE MONASTERY OF SAINT CATHERINE. This Greek Orthodox monastery is located at the foot of the traditional Mount Sinai and claims to be the location where God appeared to the biblical Moses in a burning bush. Built between 548 and 565, it is believed to be the oldest continuously inhabited Christian monastery in the world.

REFRESHED AT ELIM. Elim is commonly identified with Wadi Gharandel, in the Sinai Peninsula. It is believed this oasis was where the Israelites camped after crossing the Red Sea. The Bible describes the place as having 12 wells of water and 70 palm trees.

PHOTOS: FOTOLIA.COM | GARY WEBSTER

Egyptian Third Intermediate Period, believes Mount Sinai to be Jebel Musa. He locates Succoth at the Egyptian site of Tjeku.[9] And Egyptologist James Hoffmeier agrees, suggesting that the current archaeological and textual evidence support this conclusion.[10] Egyptologists believe the Hebrew word *succoth* corresponds to the Egyptian toponym *Tkw (Tjeku)*.[11] The main evidence for locating Succoth at Tjeku is in the comparison of the Hebrew word *succoth* and Egyptian word *tjeku*. Besides this, there really isn't much evidence linking the two.

With the two locations of Succoth now on the map, we have a clear distinction between those who would place Sinai in Saudi Arabia and those who locate it in the Sinai Peninsula. If Succoth is in the Sinai Peninsula, then the only sea the escaping Israelites could have crossed is somewhere along the Gulf of Aqaba, thereby placing them in Saudi Arabia at their exit. However, if Succoth is located west of the line of lakes running north–south from the Mediterranean to the present day Gulf of Suez, then it is reasonable to locate Mount Sinai somewhere in the Sinai Peninsula, where it is more popularly believed to be.

Currently the proper translation of the Hebrew words *Yam Suf* is either "Reed Sea" or "Red Sea," but this is still the subject of debate. Nevertheless, Kitchen contextualises this debate in stating that "the term applies to the Perso-Arabian Gulf, Arabian Sea and our present Red Sea, in a similar fashion to the way the word *Asia* from a small Roman province in what is now Turkey, is now used to cover everything from the Bosporus to Japan."[12]

3. Elim

The third location to be scrutinised is a place called Elim, which is mentioned in Exodus 15:22, 27. The book of Exodus states that Elim and Sinai sit on either side of the Wilderness of Sin, and Numbers 33:8–15 gives the final itinerary from the Yam Suph (Red Sea) to Sinai. According to our three views, Elim is either in the Sinai Peninsula or in Saudi Arabia.

Locating Elim in Saudi Arabia

The Interactive Bible believes the most probable location for Elim is adjacent to the Straits of Tiran. Its proposed site still presents many of the characteristics ascribed to Elim in the text of Exodus. Pictures on their website[13] show a site with many trees within an encompassing desert, indicating a local spring.[14] *The Interactive Bible* also believes the Bible text strongly infers that Marah and Elim are likely more inland situations. They deduce this from the biblical narrative, which states that the Israelites exited the Red Sea, went to Marah, then to Elim, finally camping beside the Red Sea, thus implying that Marah and Elim were not beside the Red Sea but somewhere inland.[15]

The site proposed by *The Interactive Bible* does have many of the physical characteristics described, thus supporting its claim as the location of Elim. However, it is far from conclusive and is, again, reliant upon locating Succoth in the Sinai Peninsula, which as stated is still speculative.

Locating Elim in the Wadi-Tumilat

Kitchen, on the other hand, locates Elim as one of the possible watering places along the Sinai west coast. Kitchen states that the Wilderness of Shur of Exodus 15:22 and the Wilderness of Etham of Numbers 33:8 are but two names for the exact same location.[16] He then places the Wilderness of Etham on the eastern end of the Wadi-Tumilat, and noting that the Israelites travelled a three-day journey southward into the wilderness, Elim is placed on the southern end of the wilderness, somewhere quite near the Gulf of Suez.[17]

The Exodus Decoded documentary likewise places Elim slightly north of this location. The film identifies Elim as a site just south of lake El-balah (its location of the Yam Suf)

HASHEM EL-TARIF, CENTRAL SINAI

JEBEL AL-LAWZ, SAUDI ARABIA

JEBEL MUSA, SINAI PENINSULA

PHOTOS: ASSOCIATED PRODUCERS LTD | MASTERFILE.COM | TODD BOLEN—BIBLEPLACES.COM

at Ayun Musa, which means "the springs of Moses," and they thus claim that this name means it was the likely site of Elim. The documentary then claims that the Bible says Mount Sinai is a 14-day journey from Elim but it provides no indication of how this is calculated. Jacobovici, the presenter of *Exodus Decoded,* proposes that a mass of people including children could walk around 15 km (10 miles) in a day, thus placing Mount Sinai some 210 km (125 miles) into the Sinai Peninsula.

If Kitchen is correct in locating Succoth at Tjeku, then locating Elim along the west coast of Sinai fits well with the geography. It follows the passing of the second Yam Suf indicated in Numbers 33 and also possesses the water richness to support trees and wells.

THE MOUNTAIN WHERE GOD SPOKE. At least 14 mountain sites have been "identified" as the authentic Sinai of the Bible, where it is believed Moses received the Ten Commandments from God. Three of the more popular and likely locations this article looks at are Jebel Al-Lawz, in Saudi Arabia; Hashem el-Tarif, in central Sinai—made famous through the 2006 documentary *The Exodus Decoded*, and the traditional location of Jebel Musa. Although no archeological evidence of Moses' presence on Jebel Musa exists, for more than 1000 years pilgrims from all over the world have come to climb to it summit.

4. Kadesh-Barnea

Our final locating geographical place name is Kadesh Barnea, which is where the Israelites journeyed to after Mount Sinai. Deuteronomy 1:2 states that Kadesh Barnea is an 11-day journey from Mount Sinai via Mount Sier. At this point, Jebel Musa and Hashem el-Tarif both agree on the location again, whilst Jebel Al-Lawz proposes an alternative location.

Locating Kadesh Barnea at el-Beidha

The Jebel Al-Lawz Mount Sinai places Kadesh Barnea at el-Beidha, five km (three miles) north of Petra in the Transjordan. Jewish historian Josephus, writing in A.D. 110, and Eusebius in A.D. 325, both believed Kadesh Barnea was located at Petra. The theorising for its location at Petra is based on placing Kadesh Barnea on the border of Edom, through the evidence given in Numbers 20:16. *The Interactive Bible* states that archaeology has shown Edom to be located in the Transjordan. They name Nelson Glueck, an American rabbi, historian and archaeologist as one who recognised Edom as being in the Transjordan region and reference a map from the *Biblical Archaeological Review* (December 1996), which placed Edom east of the Arava valley.[18]

Their strongest objection to locating Kadesh Barnea at the traditional site of el-Qudeirat is that they believe el-Qudeirat lies within the so-called "Promised Land," which puts Israel entering the Promised Land ahead of the time recorded and ahead of God's schedule. This is because el-Qudeirat is 27 km (15 miles) east of Wadi Al-Arish, which is the biblical border between Egypt and Israel.[19] El-Qudeirat is five km (three miles) west of the modern border of Israel as determined in the 1947 Partition, and the modern border is some 32 km (18 miles) east of the biblical border of Israel.[20]

The producers of *The Interactive Bible* recognise that placing Kadesh at Petra goes against today's scholarly consensus, but their objections are primarily theological, not geographical, which has implications beyond the scope of this analysis.

Locating Kadesh Barnea at Ain Qudeirat

Both Jebel Musa and Hashem el-Tarif propose that Kadesh Barnea is located at Ain Qudeirat. Kitchen proposes that the most probable route from the south of Sinai to Qudeirat was out from Jebel Musa via Wadi es-Sheikh and along the main Wadi Sa'l that runs east northeast from Wadi Sheikh.[21] Kitchen believes Deuteronomy 1:2 indicates the 11-days reference is not from Mount Sinai itself but from the area of Horeb.[22] This makes the 11-day, 225-km (135-mile) journey up Sinai's east side from the area of Wadi es-Sheikh (Horeb/Sinai zone) to Kadesh Barnea possible if one travelled at a rate of around 20 km (12 miles) per day.[23]

Jacobivici, the presenter of *Exodus Decoded,* does not agree with Kitchen's theory and he states in his film that any mountain in the south of Sinai is too far away to make Qudeirat in the 11 days allocated in Deuteronomy 1:2. He quotes an estimate by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees that a mass of refugees can move at no more than 15 km (10 miles) a day. If that is the case, then Mount Sinai can be no more than 165 km (100 miles) from Kadesh Barnea/Ein el-Qudeirat.[24]

He calculates the Kadesh to Horeb journey as actually to Mount Sinai and not to the region of Horeb. It can be assumed that this is the reason he believes any site on the south of Sinai lies outside the 11-day boundary.

Conclusions

Jebel Musa, Al-Lawz and Hashem el-Tarif represent three geographical regions each of which are claimed to house the real Mount Sinai, but each relies on different types of evidence to support their argument. Those who support placing Mount Sinai in Saudi Arabia tend to draw most of their evidence from an interpretation of the Bible text. For example, they interpret words like "wilderness" in Exodus to imply a certain distance into Sinai that is not explicitly stated in the Bible.

Those who place Mount Sinai in central Sinai balance their evidence between interpretations of the biblical text and calculating distances from various locations mentioned in the Bible. The 11-day journey from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea that Deuteronomy mentions is one location they believe excludes the southern Sinai option because it is simply too far away. They also believe that Moses' exodus would have used the trans-Sinai route, which crosses from Egypt through central Sinai to Aqaba, known today as the Kings Highway. Because of this, they believe that Mount Sinai must be close to the Kings Highway and thus in central Sinai.

The advocates of Mount Sinai at a southern mountain in the Sinai Peninsula rely on the science of epigraphy, and the relationship between Hebrew and Egyptian words to deduce the locations of places in the Exodus itinerary. All three mountain locations have strong and weak arguments, but until more evidence is found, the location of Mount Sinai will continue to be a mystery to be explored by the Bible scholar and a place to be visited by the pilgrim. ◆

ENDNOTES:

1. G Franz, *Is Mount Sinai in Saudi Arabia?* (Chafer Theological Seminary, 2006), p 72.

2a. *Biblical Archaeology Review,* March/April, 2014 p38–41.

2b. *The Interactive Bible,* http://www.bible.ca/archeology.

3. Numbers 33 contains the itinerary of the Exodus.

4. *The Interactive Bible,* http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-succoth.htm

5. For Jebel Musa the works of K Kitchen are predominately used.

6. ibid.

7. ibid.

8. ibid.

9. K A Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Michigan: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing, 2003) p 257.

10. J M Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) p 120.

11. ibid. p 65.

12. Kitchen, 2003, p 257.

13. *The Interactive Bible,* http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-elim.htm

14. ibid.

15. ibid.

16. Kitchen, 2003, p 268.

17. ibid.

18. *The Interactive Bible,* http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-edomite-territory-mt-seir.htm

19. *The Interactive Bible,* http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-kadesh-barnea-southern-border-judah-territory.htm

20. *The Interactive Bible,* http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-kadesh-barnea.htm

21. Kitchen, 2003, p 272, 273.

22. ibid.

23. ibid.

24. S Jacobovici, "Mount Sinai has been located," *The Jerusalem Post,* September 25 2013, http://jamestabor.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mount-Sinai-has-been-located.pdf

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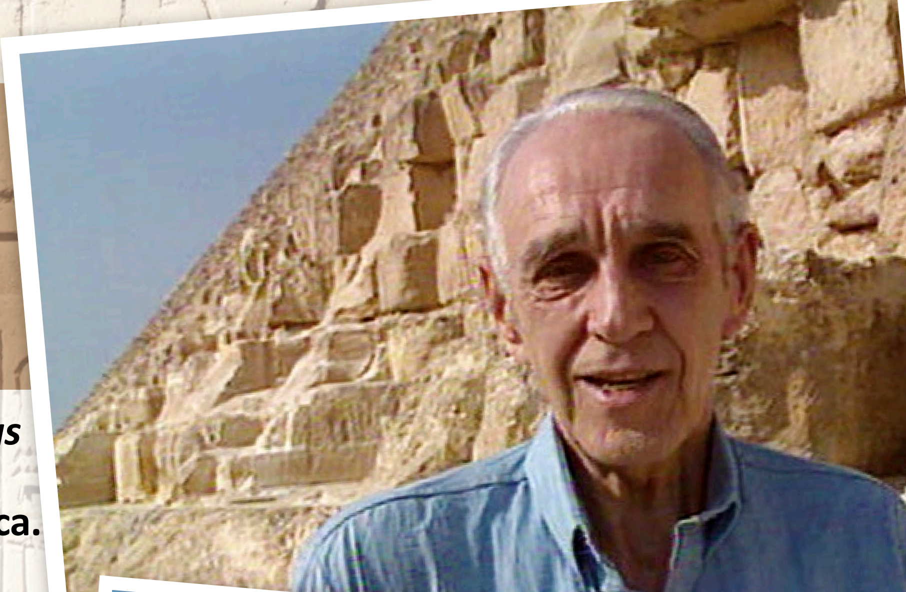

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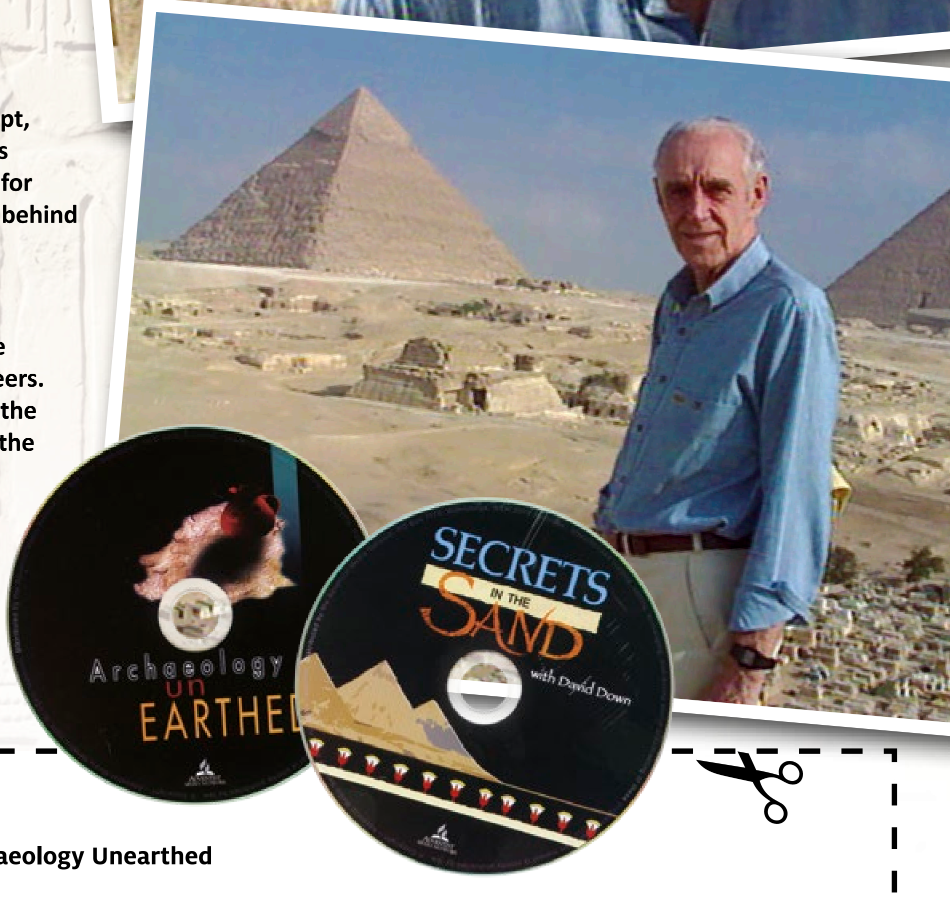

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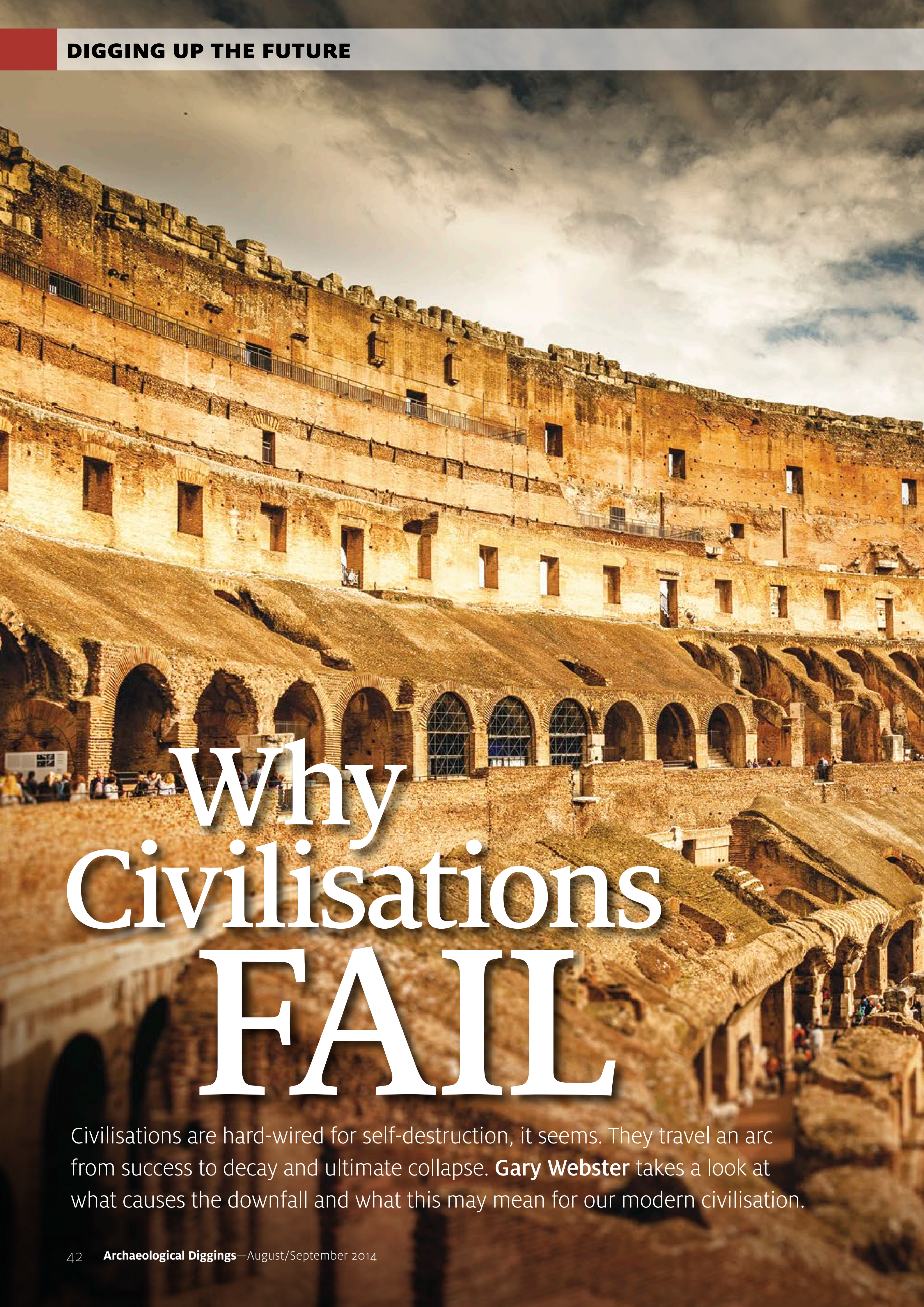


Why Civilisations FAIL

Civilisations are hard-wired for self-destruction, it seems. They travel an arc from success to decay and ultimate collapse. **Gary Webster** takes a look at what causes the downfall and what this may mean for our modern civilisation.

VIOLENT ENTERTAINMENT. The great Roman Colosseum witnessed gladiatorial contests, mock sea battles, animal hunts, executions and re-enactments of famous battles, all laced with a disregard for human life.

PHOTO: WHITEWIZZARD—FOTOLIA.COM

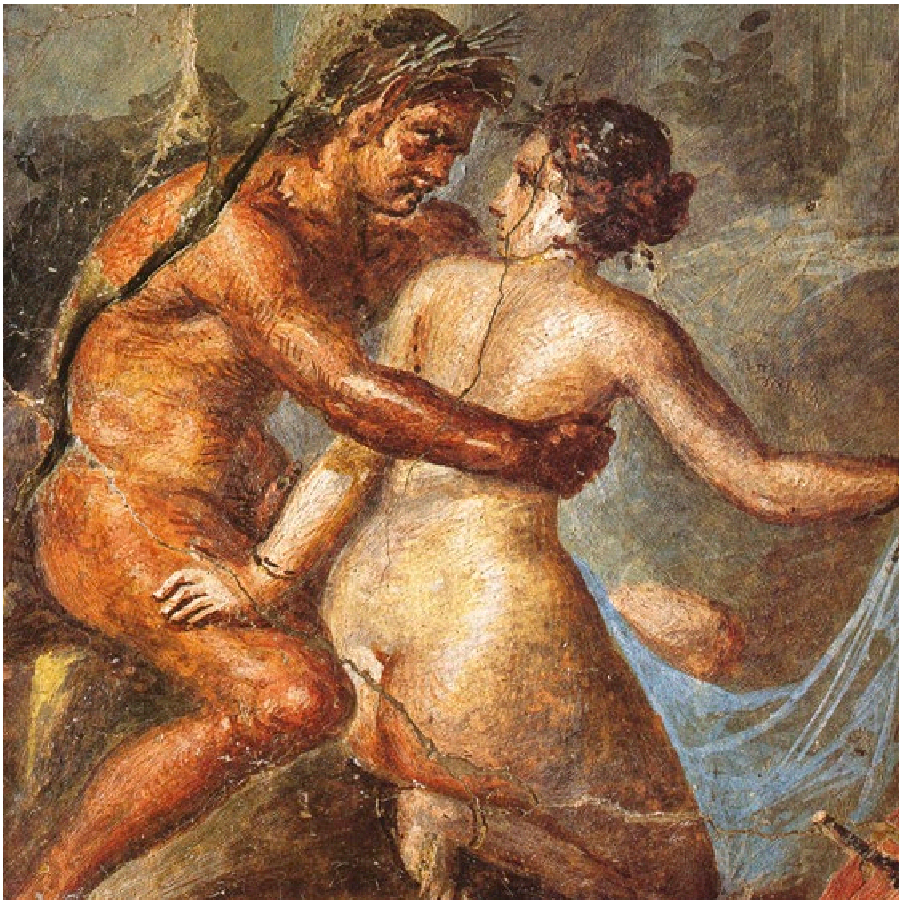


PHOTO: MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO NAZIONALE

SIR ARNOLD TOYNBEE, WHO TAUGHT FOR MANY years at the University of London, wrote a 12-volume analysis of the rise and fall of world civilisations entitled *A Study of History.* In it, he analysed the histories of 21 different civilisations, such as ancient Rome, Emperial China, Babylon, Greece and the Aztecs.

In the fifth volume, subtitled "The Disintegrations of Civilizations," Toynbee presents six provocative and unmistakable characteristics for the disintegration and collapse of a major civilisation. His six characteristics seem so ominously portentious concerning our own civilisation. In this and the next issue, we will examine all six.

1. CULTURAL SUICIDE

Ancient Rome

According to Toynbee, societies in disintegration are seldom simply overrun by another invading civilisation. Rather, they commit a kind of cultural suicide, suffering what he calls a "schism [or fracture] of the soul," in which the "soul" of society turns upon itself. It is a form of cultural suicide, by which a civilisation self-destructs.

The Roman Colosseum stands today as one of the most sobering but classic examples of this "schism of the soul." In this great arena, gladiatorial contests, mock sea battles, animal hunts, executions and re-enactments of famous battles took place. Here, for the sake of entertainment, the leisure hours of Roman citizens were whiled away in the grandstands, as they watched and cheered as human life was slaughtered, slashed, gutted and gored before their gaping eyes and applauding hands. It was an orgy of blood and guts; men, women and children were butchered for entertainment, like a game of football on a Sunday afternoon.

Cultural suicide: is it happening again? In light of modern film production and television programming seen globally, it is hard to imagine any thinking man or woman anywhere in the world not being able to sense it in our society's bloodthirsty hunger and voracious appetite for human violence—all for the sake of entertainment. There is no doubt that we are repeating the tragic collapse of Rome and are doing so with such class, style and subtlety—which is all the more deplorable and dangerous, because we can't even see our demise inexorably overtaking us!

AMUSING THEMSELVES TO DEATH. Pompeii is famous for its erotic frescoes like this depiction of a satyr and maenad (above), sharing an intimate embrace, from the walls of the Casa Del restaurant. The inhabitants of Pompeii were so engrossed in, and addicted to, sensual living and entertainment that they failed or were unable to heed the warning signs of coming destruction by Mount Vesuvius.

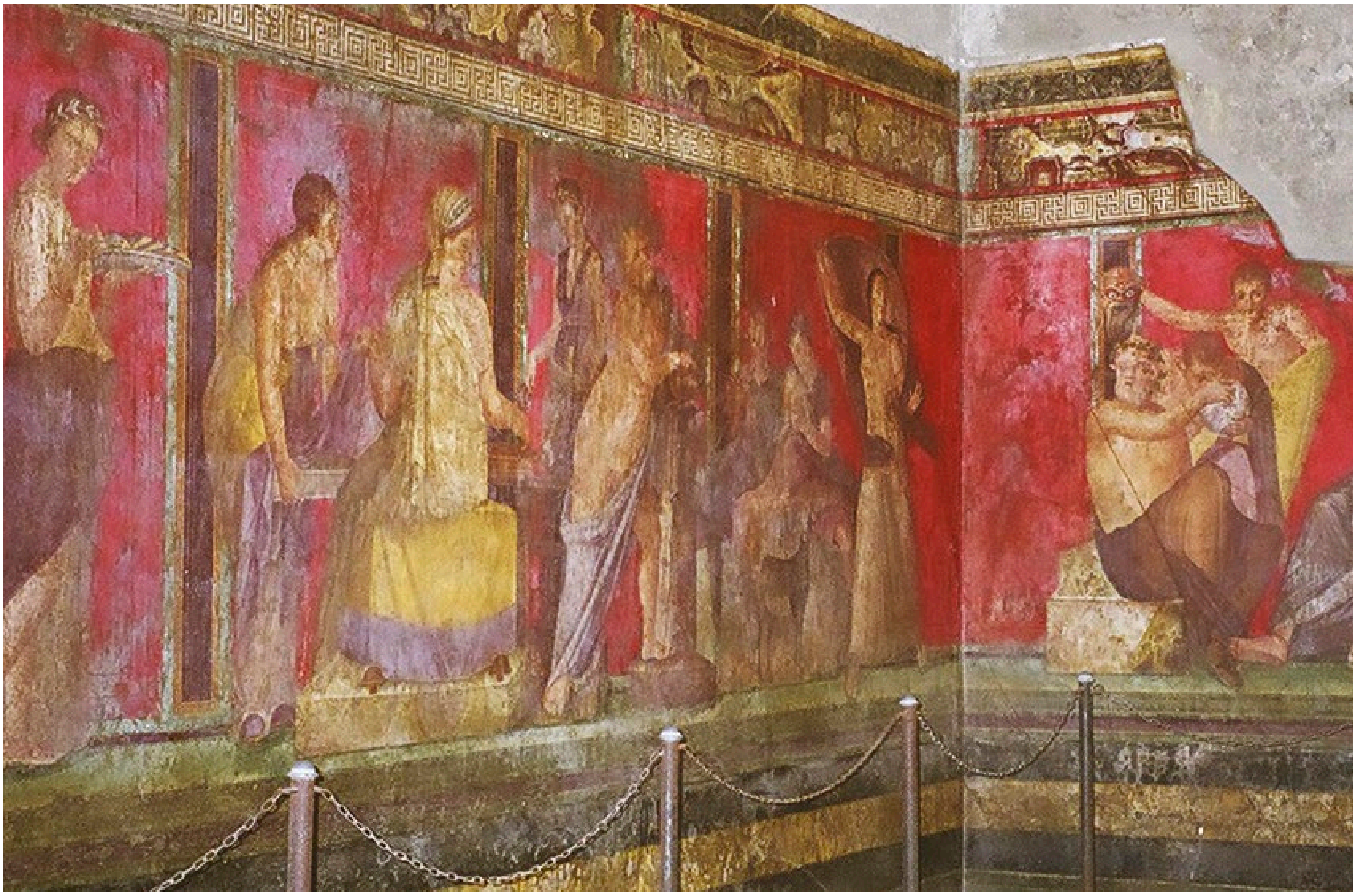


PHOTO: THINKSTOCK

THE VILLA OF MYSTERIES contains some of the most beautiful and best preserved frescoes in Pompeii. Although covered in ash during the eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79, the building suffered only minor damage. The subjects of the frescoes are still a contentious issue, with many scholars believing they depict an initiation of a woman into the Dionysian Mysteries. Whoever the owner of this building was, there is no doubt that he or she was a wealthy and influential individual, living a luxurious life in a world of distractions and entertainment.

2. TRUANCY OR ESCAPISM

Pompeii

Another word for truancy is "escapism," a mental running away from society's problems by retreating into a world of distraction and entertainment. Toynbee's point, put simply, is that a disintegrating civilisation succumbs more and more to "truancy" or running from reality through retreat into distracting entertainment.

The ancient Roman city of Pompeii, near Naples in Italy, which was destroyed in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius on August 24, A.D. 79, is a classic illustration of this characteristic of a disintegrating civilisation. This fun-loving, vacation city of the Romans was given to the distractions of materialism, sensuality and pleasure seeking, as seen by the lavish homes, the many frescoes that decorated them and the recovered household items, many of which had overtly sensual and sexual themes. In spite of earthquake warnings in A.D. 62 and A.D. 79, caused by the subterranean convulsion of Mount Vesuvius, the inhabitants of Pompeii were so engrossed in, and addicted to, their sensual living and entertainment that they failed to heed the warning signs.

In light of the trillions of dollars that are spent globally on the escapism of alcohol, drugs, entertainment, sports pursuits and frenzied partying, it becomes blatantly obvious that modern civilisation is risking disintegration and collapse, according to Toynbee's second characteristic sign.

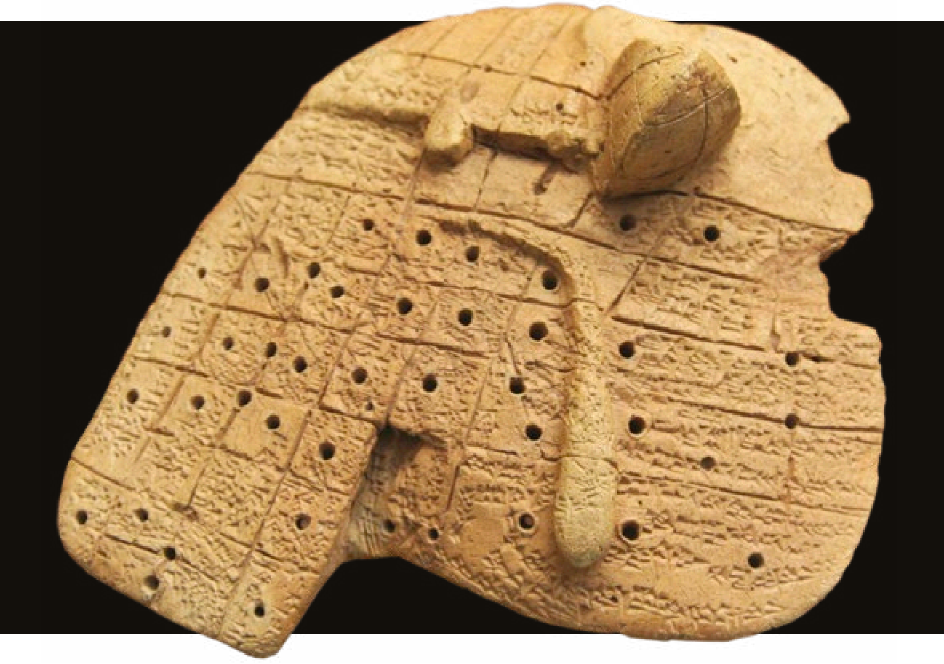
3. A SENSE OF PROMISCUITY

Babylon

This sense of promiscuity that infiltrates a dying society is not so much about sexual promiscuity, "but describes a state of mind that indiscriminately accepts anything and everything in order to find meaning and perhaps stave off the impending doom." It is "an uncritical tolerance and an unfocused embrace of the melting pot in religion, literature, art, manners and culture" (Nelson).

Ancient Babylon, especially in its religious practices, perhaps best illustrates this characteristic more than any other ancient civilisation. While divination, magic, exorcism and astrology were widespread among the ancient peoples, their practice is one of the most distinctive features of Babylonian civilisation.

The Babylonians believed that the gods communicated their intentions to humankind by means of signs in natural phenomena and worldly events and that it was possible to learn to read these signs through prolonged observation and deeper study. Future events were sought in the entrails of sacrificed animals or in the flight of birds. Hepatoscopy, in which the livers of sacrificed animals were studied and compared with inscribed "model" livers of clay, was especially practiced. These models contained detailed explanations of all form differences and directions for interpretation. Archaeologists have discovered numerous



OMENS OF THINGS TO COME. Babylonian clay model of a sheep's liver (above) used in divination about 1900–1600 B.C. The liver omen was one of the most widespread means of prediction, in which a sheep was killed and its liver and lungs examined by a priest. On this model, each box describes the implications of a blemish appearing at this position on the liver.

DEFORMITIES. Ancient letters reveal that deformities in human and animal births were taken very seriously in Mesopotamia. This tablet pictured right, called *shumma izbu,* from the library of King Ashurbanipal (669–631 B.C.) concerns malformed newborn humans and animals and their ominous significance.

PHOTOS: GARY WEBSTER

clay liver models in the excavations of Mesopotamian sites. Ancient diviners used many methods to predict the future. Sometimes they poured oil on water, interpreting the form of the spreading oil (lecanomancy), or shook arrows in the quiver and looked for the direction in which the first one falls (belomancy). Such discoveries agree with the Israelite prophet Ezekiel's description of Babylonian occult practices (Ezekiel 21:21).

Diviners also interpreted dreams, worked out incantation formulas to allegedly drive away evil spirits and sicknesses, and asked advice from the supposed spirits of the dead (necromancy). Every Oriental king had many diviners and magicians in his service. They were close by on every occasion, travelling with the king on military campaigns, hunting expeditions and state visits. Kings sought their counsel for various decisions, such as a route to be followed or the date on which to attack an enemy. These men largely ruled and regulated the life of their king.

Is it not true that our own civilisation is becoming increasingly promiscuous in the same way? No more clearly is this seen than in the New Age movement with its cards, pyramids, trinkets, spiritism and voodoo. Says Nelson,

> *[It] is taking intellectual and thinking circles around this planet by storm [and] is the most melting pot blend of paganism and religion, of spirituality and philosophy, of humanism and theism that has ever been embraced by this civilisation. Bright, educated human beings, grasping for meaning, hope and assurance from the most bizarre sources, are blending their grasped straws into a strange concoction of magic and hope! (Net 98, No 3).*

Gene Edward Veith describes it as "the triumph of the mass mind" *(Postmodern Time,* page 45).

What is most intriguing is that in this post-modern age of ours, it is occurring among atheists and secularists, and both non-Christian and Christian religions alike. Could it not be that this characteristic of Toynbee's is a sobering warning that our civilisation is on the brink of disintegration and collapse? Again, one wonders if the ancient apocalyptic prophetic manuscript of the apostle John, penned from a cave on the lonely Isle of Patmos (see Revelation 13:13, 14; 16:13, 14), shouldn't be taken seriously after all?

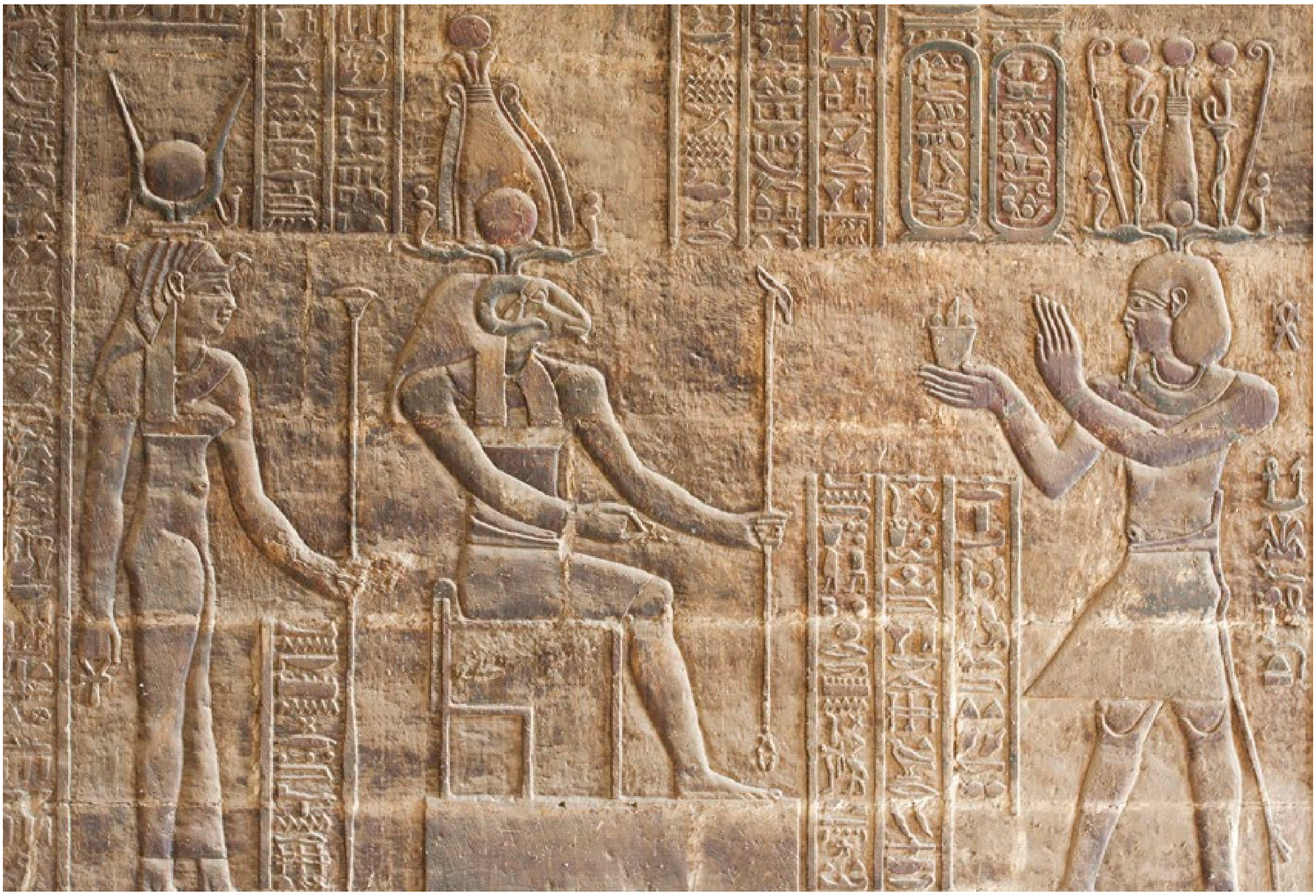
4. A SENSE OF DRIFT

Egypt

By a "sense of drift," Toynbee means that "people yield to a meaningless determinism (nothing we do can make a difference now; fate has decreed it!), as if their efforts do not matter and as if they have no control over their lives" (Veith, *op cit*). There is a fatalism of the masses with an accompanying sense of helplessness and powerlessness.

But Toynbee's research also put its finger on one of the primary sources of this sense of drift:

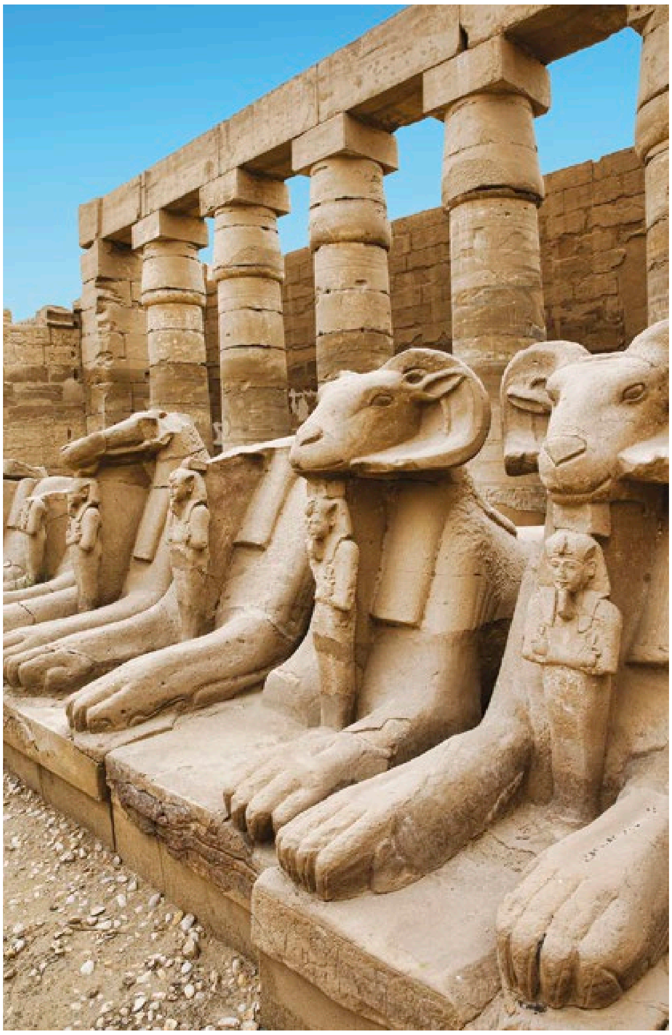
> *The sense of drift . . . is one of the most painful of the tribulations that afflict the souls of men and women who are called upon to live their lives in an age of social disintegration; and this pain is perhaps a [result of] . . .*



PHOTOS: MASTERFILE.COM

EGYPTIAN GODS AND GODDESSES closely resemble humans in their art and decorations. But many of their gods, such as Khnum from the Temple of Khnum in Esna (above), were depicted with a human body and an animal head. Khnum was one of the earliest Egyptian deities, originally the god of the source of the Nile, also, and interestingly for Christians, credited with creating humans out of clay.

AVENUE OF RAMS-HEADED SPHINXES, KARNAK. The ram was closely associated with the Egyptian god Amun, as a symbol of fertility. The Egyptians worshipped more than 2000 gods in ancient times and thus believed that to maintain order, they needed to sustain them through temple rituals and offerings.



> *idolatry through a worship of the creature instead of the creator; for in this . . . we have found one of the causes of those breakdowns from which the disintegrations of civilizations follow (Toynbee,* A Study of History, *vol 5, page 412).*

There it is. Following his painstaking research of 21 world civilisations in an endeavour to discover why they disintegrate and collapse, he identifies idolatry as one of the causes.

Of all ancient civilisations, probably few could match ancient Egypt, with its more than 2000 gods, when it came to idolatry. It was believed that all forces of nature, animate or inanimate, worked under the jurisdiction of one or several gods. As a result, Egyptians felt they had to appease these gods in order to enjoy their blessing on their life. It was thought that the good life could only be attained by becoming, and remaining, a friend of the gods. Accordingly, ancient Egyptian religion was a complex system of polytheistic beliefs and rituals that were an integral part of their society.

Formal religious practice centred on the pharaoh. Though human, he was believed to be descended from the gods and accordingly acted as the intermediary between his people and the gods. He was thus obligated to sustain the gods through temple rituals and offerings, so that they could maintain order. As a result, the state dedicated enormous resources to both the construction of Egyptian temples and the rituals surrounding them. With the multiplication of gods came a multiplication on the call on state reserves, and therefore of taxes placed on the people.

Could it just be that our civilisation's voracious appetite for the worship of these modern gods is taking its toll on our lives, our homes, our nations?

Toynbee's research showing idolatry as a cause of this "sense of drift" or "meaningless determinism," and therefore a cause of disintegration and collapse of a civilisation, was shared by the ancient Biblical prophets:

> *The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "I am about to bring punishment on Amon god of Thebes, on Pharaoh, on Egypt and her gods and her kings, and on those who rely on Pharaoh" (Jeremiah 46:25).*

Hans Kung has insightfully noted what is at the heart of all idolatry:

> *We all have a personal God: a supreme value by which we regulate everything, to which we orientate ourselves, for which if need be we sacrifice everything. And if this is not the true God, then it is some kind of idol, an old or new one—money, career, sex or pleasure—none of them evil things in themselves, but enslaving for those for whom they become God (*Why I Am Still a Christian*, page 47).*

Perhaps Kung is onto something here: could it be that our civilisation's voracious appetite for the worship of modern gods is taking its toll on our lives, our homes, our nations? Have the masses not only become cynical about politics but about life in general, succumbing to a it-doesn't-matter/what-can-I-do mentality that reflects this sense of drift?

There they are—four of Toynbee's six characteristics from the ancient past of a civilisation in the free-fall of collapse and disintegration. Ominous indicators indeed, as we look at our contemporary civilisation! Sadly, it is so often true that the only thing we learn from history is that we don't learn from history. However, and thankfully, two more of Toynbee's indicators still remain. I'll examine them in the next issue of DIGGINGS, when I'll reveal how, that if turned around, the slide toward disintegration might be halted. ◆

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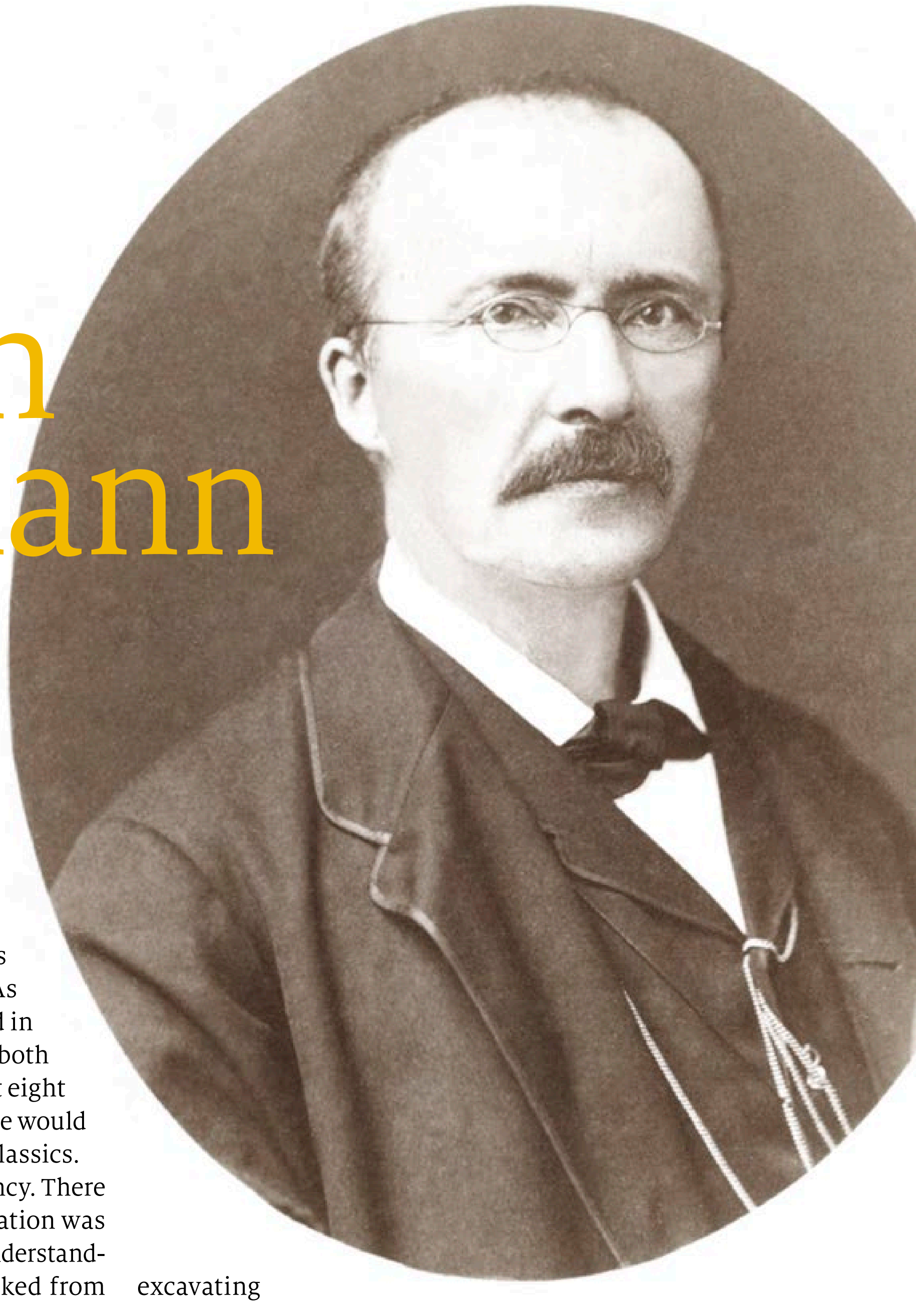
Heinrich Schliemann



HEINRICH SCHLIEMANN. A portrait dated July 25, 1883, of the German businessman and future archaeologist, famous for his discoveries of the city of Troy and the mask of Agamemnon.

PHOTO: BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE

OF ALL THE WORLD'S MOST notable archaeologists, Heinrich Schliemann was perhaps the greatest pioneer and the worst example of them all. Famous for excavating both Troy and Mycenae, Schliemann's story is as fascinating as it is somewhat repelling.

Schliemann was born on January 6, 1822, in Neubukow, Mecklenburg-Schwering, Germany. His mother died when he was just nine, so it was his father who left the most lasting impression. As a Protestant minister, Schliemann's father instilled in the young Heinrich a deep love for ancient history both in and outside of the Bible; so much so that at just eight years of age, Schliemann was already dreaming—he would later write—of excavating the Troy of the Greek classics.

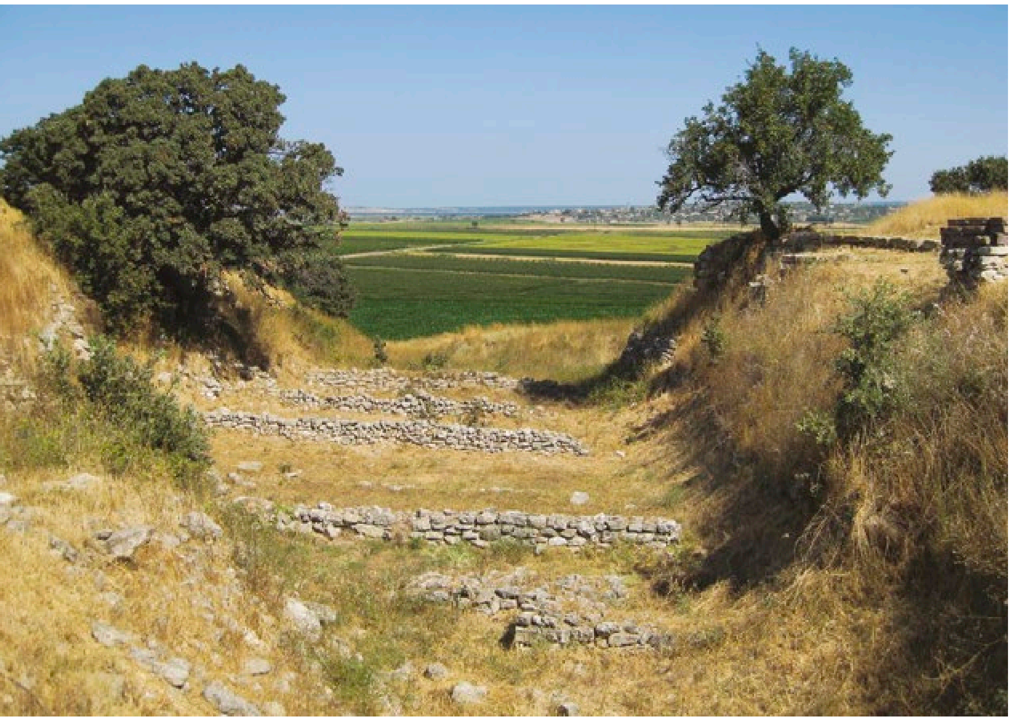
But at that time, archaeology was still in its infancy. There was no science applied to archaeology, and excavation was haphazard and more about treasure seeking than understanding. However, when Schliemann's father was sacked from ministry for embezzling church funds, the family lost the means to put Schliemann through university.

Schliemann never forgot this slight to the family. Years later, when he became a father himself, Schliemann only grudgingly allowed his children to be baptised and on the condition that verses from Homer's *Iliad* would be read aloud during the service. Feeling robbed of a university education, Schliemann could only pray that one day he might learn Greek and other tertiary subjects. Providentially for Schliemann, he possessed a gift for languages and in time he would become fluent in 14 languages, including Turkish and his beloved Greek, both of which would come in very handy when he eventually turned his hand to archaeology.

Before he became an archaeologist, Schliemann worked a number of jobs, but it was only when he moved to Russia in 1852 that his career as an entrepreneur took off. Just six years on, Schliemann was able to retire wealthy enough to fund his childhood dream of moving to Turkey to excavate Troy.

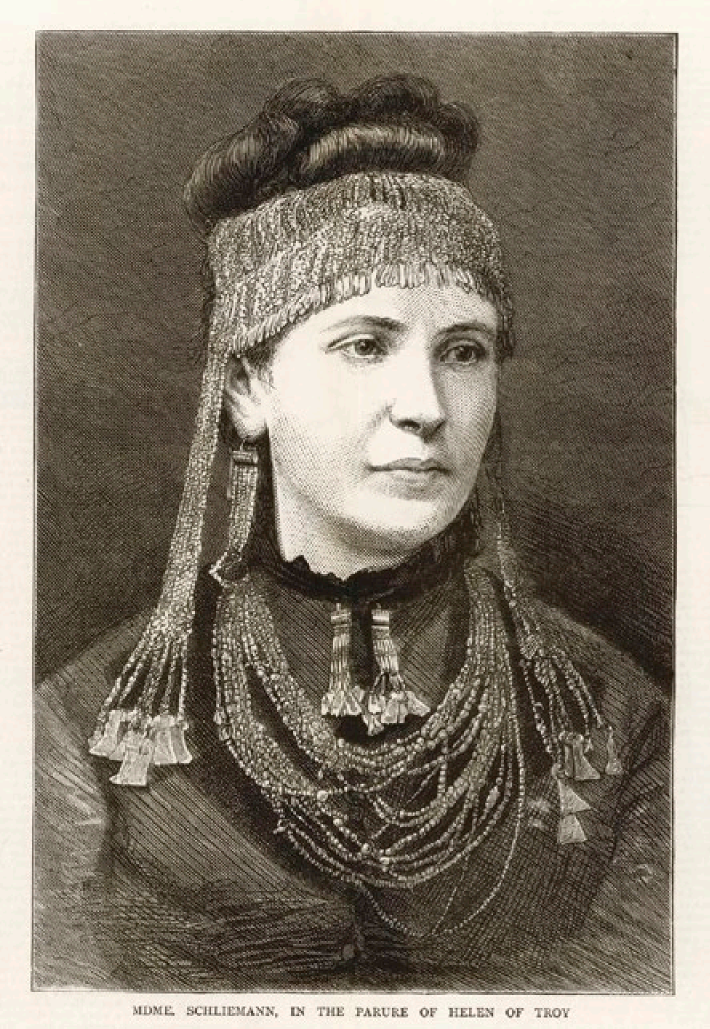
Frank Calvert, a British archaeologist, had already been excavating Hissarlik in northwest Turkey, which he had identified as Troy, for years. But when Schliemann arrived on site and joined Calvert's team, he announced to the world's press that he, and not Calvert, had discovered Troy! His announcement hit the headlines around the world and Schliemann was awarded a PhD from the University of Rostock.

But while Schliemann now possessed the highest of university qualifications, he lacked all experience of actual excavating method. So when he dug a huge trench right through Hissarlik to get to its lowest levels, which he mistakenly imagined were the relics of Homer's Troy and containing treasure, Schliemann and Calvert fell out. Calvert stormed



STUCK IN A TRENCH. Schliemann rarely followed good archaeological procedures and was criticised by later archaeologists because of his techniques (or lack of them). In his enthusiasm to find Homer's Troy (and treasure), he dug this trench through Hissarlik.

TREASURE OF PRIAM. To garner publicity for his discovery of Troy, Schliemann disrespectfully dressed his wife Sophia in the famous gold jewellery from the so-called Priam's Treasure.


MDME. SCHLIEMANN, IN THE PARURE OF HELEN OF TROY

off, leaving the excavation altogether. And "Schliemann's trench" can still be seen today.

Schliemann kept at his work, and in 1873 he discovered the so-called Priam's Teasure, which he named after the Trojan king who fought the Greeks during the Trojan War. Schliemann infamously dressed his wife, Sophia, in some of these treasures, which he christened the Jewels of Helen, after the Greek queen Helen—who ran off with Paris, the Trojan prince, which resulted in the Trojan War—and had her pose in them for newspapers.

However, because of such crass and disrespectful behaviour, including when he began smuggling Turkey's priceless artefacts out of the country to archenemy Greece, Schliemann fell out with the Ottoman Turkish authorities. He defended himself by saying that he was simply protecting them from corrupt local officials, but the government took offence, revoked his permission to excavate anywhere in Turkey, sued him for embezzlement and ran him out of the country. Schliemann sought safety in Greece. But he was not idle for long. Using the treasures he had stolen from Turkey, Schliemann paid off the Greek government and was given permission to excavate at another Homeric site, Mycenae, some 90 km (55 miles) south-west of Athens. There, in 1876, Schliemann discovered more treasure, including a gold death mask. He immediately cabled the king of Greece, famously remarking that he had "gazed upon the face of Agamemnon," the Greek king who led the Greeks during the Trojan War.

But Schliemann hankered to return to Hissarlik and in 1878 was back there, after coming to an "arrangement" with the Turkish government that two-thirds of everything he uncovered at Hissarlik would be donated to the Turkish Museum in Constantinople. Just as he had paid off the Greek government with Trojan artefacts, so now he was paying off the Turkish government with Trojan Greek artefacts.

But to be fair, it wasn't all about treasure for him. The truth was, he was obsessed with archaeology and the past. He is even credited as saying, "I could imagine nothing pleasanter than to spend all of my life digging for relics of the past." And that's why Schliemann would return to Troy again and again, continuing

PHOTO: MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY—ALAMY

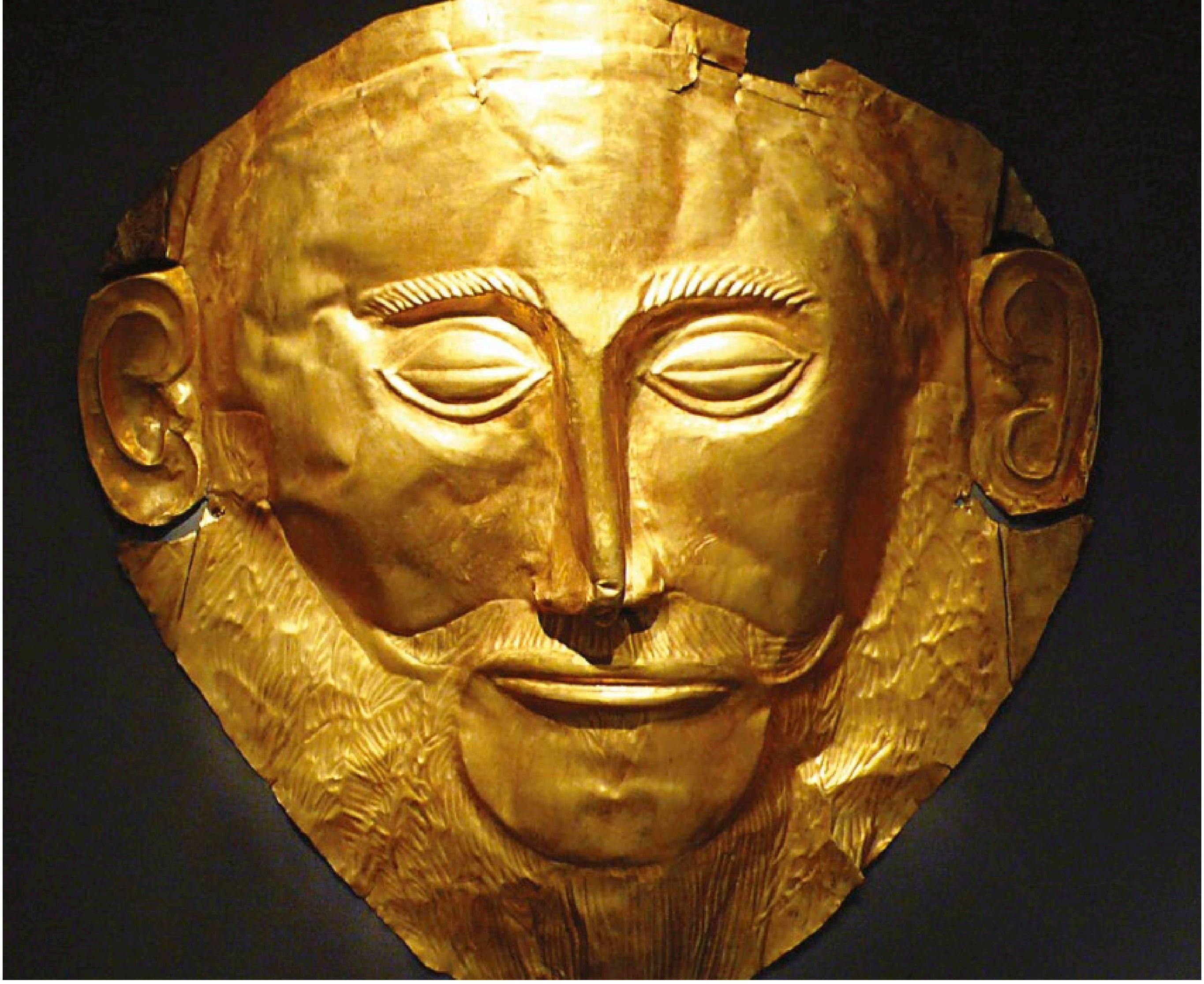


PHOTO: XUAN CHE

his excavations. But on his fourth and final dig at Hissarlik, on August 1, 1890, Schliemann took ill with a chronic ear infection and on December 26, 1890, died of cholesteatoma in a hotel room in Naples after a visit to the ruins of Pompeii. His corpse was later interred in a Greek temple-shaped mausoleum in the First Cemetery in Athens.

Schliemann might have been a flawed character, but he was also a visionary. Often, as he excavated Hissarlik, he would be seen sitting down and looking around, daydreaming of what might have taken place during the Trojan War millennia before.

Thankfully, the methods of archaeologists have come a long way since Schliemann's time. But the ability of archaeologists to spark human imagination lives on and thanks to Schliemann, continues to excite popular interest in our ancient past. ◆

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THE FACE OF AGAMEMNON. Schliemann believed this gold funeral mask was that of the legendary Greek leader, Agamemnon. It was discovered in the royal grave circle within the walls of Mycenae (below). Modern archaeological research suggests that the mask is more likely from 1580–1550 B.C., or about 300 years earlier than the time of Agamemnon. The name has stuck however, and many still refer to it as the Mask of Agamemnon.

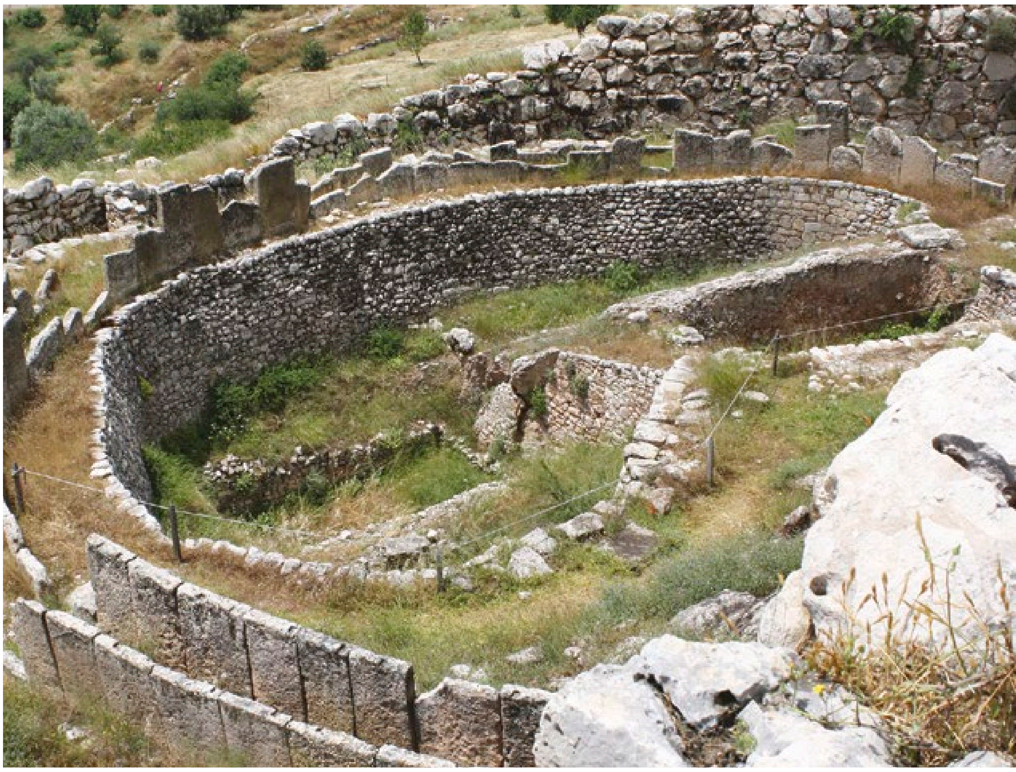
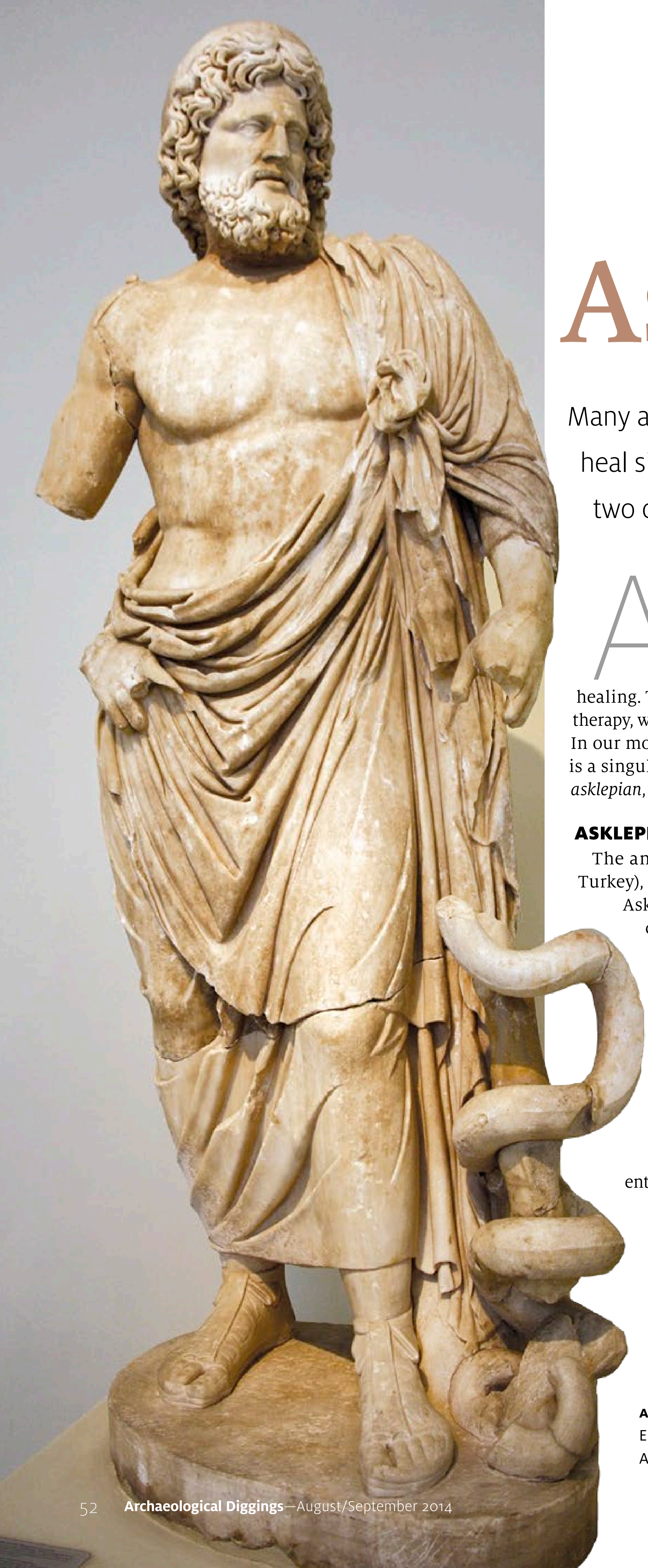


PHOTO: MARK CARTWRIGHT

HEALING OF THE Asclepius,

Many ancient gods claimed the power to heal sickness, **Wayne French** looks at two of the sites of alleged healing.



ASCLEPIUS WAS THE ANCIENT GREEK GOD of medicine or healing. The most significant shrines of Asclepius were located in the Greek cities of Epidaurus, Corinth, Cos and Pergamum. The sick flocked to these places for healing. Typical treatments included drug-induced sleep therapy, water therapy, bath treatments and dietary changes. In our modern age, the Asclepius healing symbol, which is a singular snake coiled around a rod and known as the *asklepian*, has been adopted as the medical doctor's symbol.

ASKLEPION IN PERGAMUM

The ancient city of Pergamum (today's Bergama, in Turkey), contained one of these healing centres called an Asklepion, built in honour of Asclepius. In the first century A.D., this centre of healing was a hybrid hospital and health spa, where patients were treated with everything they needed, from a mud bath to major surgery. Even emperors came from Rome to be treated there.

But terminally-ill patients were not allowed to go into the Asklepion, because the priests of Asclepius didn't want anyone to hear that someone had died in the Asklepion. Rick Renner, author of *The Seat of Satan: Ancient Pergamum*, mentions a sign placed just above the official entrance to the Asklepion, which stated, "Death is not permitted here." He says that the only way a sick person was going to get in to begin with was if they already knew they were going to survive.[1] To confirm this, patients had to walk unaided along an 800-metre-long paved entrance road to the healing centre, before they were allowed to enter. This paved entrance road is still visible.

Passing the circular temple dedicated to

ASCLEPIUS' STATUE found in the sanctuary of Asclepios at Epidaurus, from A.D. 160, is now housed in the National Archaeological Museum, Athens, Greece.

PHOTO: GIOVANNI DALL'ORTO.

GODS

Eshmun or Christ?

Asclepius and his daughters, patients then entered the medical centre through an underground tunnel into the treatment rooms. There they partook of a sedative and spent the night in the dormitories of the Asklepion, while non-poisonous snakes crawled around them through the night. They were told that the serpent-god Asclepius would speak to them in their dreams and give them a diagnosis. It was believed that the snake carried the healing power of Asclepius. If a snake slithered across them while they were sleeping at night they believed this to be a divine sign that healing was coming upon them.

The next morning, the patients told their "dreams" to the priests, who prescribed their treatments. Many of the treatments involved the use of water. Even today, visitors to the Asklepion will drink the untreated water from the ancient pipes, still believing in its healing potential!

Finally, the patients made clay sculptures of the body parts that needed healing and offered them to Asclepius. Then their names were written on white pillars (which can still be seen today) in thanks for their healing. I have seen many of these clay body parts from the temple of Asclepius on display at the Museum of Corinth, Greece. It is probably to this practice that the biblical author Paul is alluding to in one of his letters to the newly established Christian church there, when he describes the Christian church as metaphorically made up of many parts of the body (see 1 Corinthians 12).

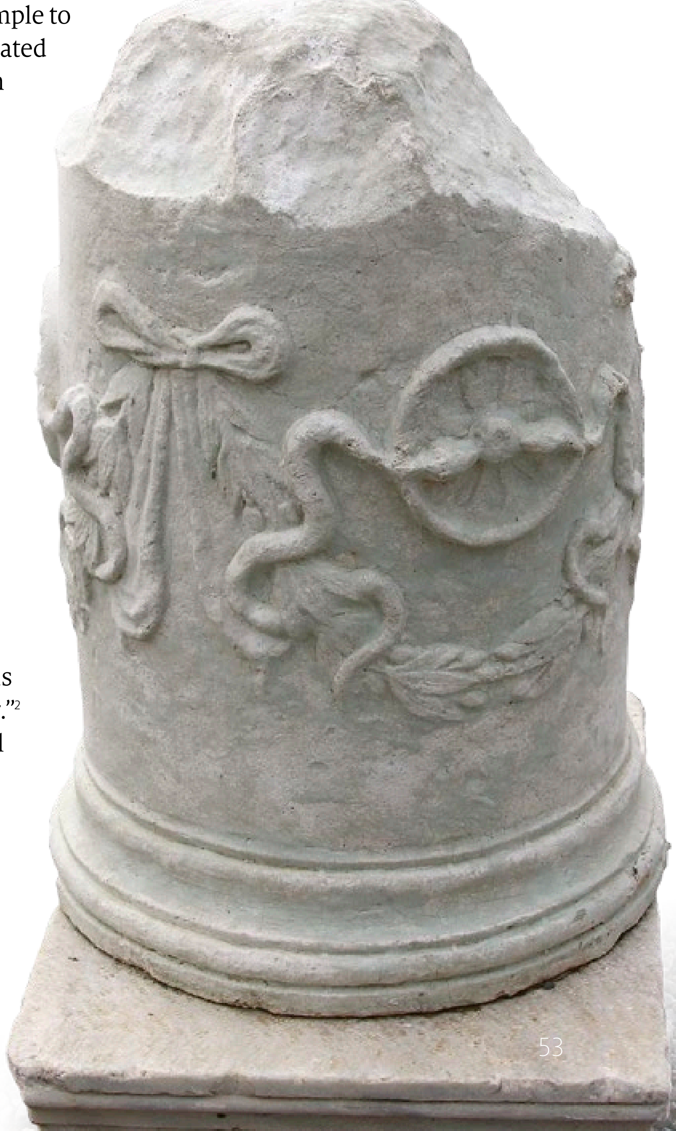
Galen of Pergamum was a prominent Greek physician, surgeon and philosopher in the Roman empire who worked in the Asklepion at Pergamum. Arguably the most accomplished of all medical researchers of antiquity, Galen influenced the development of various scientific disciplines, including anatomy, physiology, pathology, pharmacology and neurology, as well as philosophy and logic. Medical students continued to study Galen's writings until well into the nineteenth century. Galen conducted many nerve ligation experiments that supported the theory—one that is still accepted today—that the brain controls all the motions of the muscles by means of the cranial and peripheral nervous systems.

ASKLEPION IN JERUSALEM

Even in Jerusalem, archaeologists have discovered that there was a temple to the Greek god Asclepius associated with the Pool of Bethesda, which is mentioned in the Gospels.

This name "Bethesda" is made from two Hebrew words, *beth,* meaning "house," and *hesed,* meaning "mercy." So, this Hebrew word translated in full means "House of Mercy." It was constructed about 200 B.C. by the Hasmoneans, the ruling Jewish dynasty of the time, to collect water for washing the sheep that were to be used for sacrifices in the temple. The Pool of Bethesda was a familiar locale among the Jews of Jerusalem; in the Copper Scroll of Qumran it is, for example, referred to as "the place of poured out water."[2]

John tells us in his Gospel that this pool had five porches in which the sick lay "waiting for the moving of the waters" (John 5:3). Early descriptions speak of it as a double pool, with the four terraces totally surrounding two pools and



SNAKES ON A PILLAR in the Asklepion of Pergamum. The Asclepius healing symbol of a snake coiled around a rod has been adopted as the doctor's symbol of healing by today's medical profession.

PHOTO: GARY WEBSTER

PATH TO HEALING. In order to be admitted, patients were first required to walk the length of this 800 metre paved entrance to the Pergamum Asklepion unaided, in order to ensure they were sufficiently healthy so as not to die on site and damage the reputation of the facility.

VOTIVES OF THANKS. Large numbers of these clay replicas of hands and feet, arms and legs, breasts and genitals, eyes, ears and heads have been unearthed near the Temple of Asclepius ruin at Corinth. They would have been dedicated to the deity in thanks for healing.

PHOTOS: GARY WEBSTER | JERRY HAWKES—HOLYLANDPHOTOS.ORG

the fifth portico running between the two pools. Today one can look down the 13 metres from ground level to the original ancient pools of Bethesda found near the church of St Anne. These pools have been partly excavated and one can climb down to the terraces.

Above these ancient pools today stand the remnants of a temple dedicated to Asclepius. One might assume that in the strict New Testament times, there would have been objections to a pagan shrine being so close to the holy Temple, but at that time this shrine was actually situated outside the city wall.

Archaeology confirms the presence of the healing shrine of Asclepius in the area during the Late Roman period (A.D. 135). Asclepius was the god who healed soldiers and during the time of the Aelia Capitolina, when Jerusalem was totally governed by Rome under Emperor Hadrian, there were some 500 Roman soldiers living nearby in the Antonia Fortress.

Below the temple of Asclepius have been discovered rock-hewn caves, which gave easy access to the water's edge. Here a clay votive foot, thanking the god for healing, and a statue of a human head with the body of a snake, probably Asclepius, were discovered, confirming its existence as a healing shrine.

Given the Bible references to the pools and the recorded healing of a lame man at Bethesda by Christ that took place there (see John 5:1–9), the question is, was there an actual pagan healing shrine in the area during the time of Christ? There seems to be evidence that there was.

The story goes that Christ came upon a man who had an infirmity of some sort for 38 years and asked him, "Do you want to get well?" The man responded that he had no-one to help him into the pool when it was stirred up by the angel. Note, his answer makes much more sense if it occurred in a healing shrine of rock-hewn caves, having only three or four steps leading down to the water's edge, than it does to think of putting him in the large Pool of Bethesda, where he could have drowned in the deep water.

Because archaeological data suggests that the Asclepius temple dates to the late Roman period (second century A.D. and onward), Gordan Franz[3] suggests that during the New Testament period, this deity may have been called by the name of Eshmun, the Semitic healing god from Phoenicia (the Phoenician equivalent of the Greek God Asclepius). If so, then Jesus had entered the healing shrine in Bethesda of the pagan Semitic healing god, Eshmun.

PHOTO: WAYNE FRENCH

HEALING SHRINE OF A PAGAN GOD. This temple of Asclepius at Bethesda in Jerusalem, is believed to be the site where Jesus *spoke* healing to a blind man—something well beyond the claims or abilities of either Eshmun or Asclepius to perform.

However, James Charlesworth still suggests the healing god was not Eshmun but the Greek god Asclepius. At a 2010 meeting of the Near Eastern Archaeological Society, Charlesworth gave a brief report on the two pools mentioned in the Gospel of John—the Pool of Bethesda (or Bethzatha; John 5:2) and the Pool of Siloam (John 9:7). Charlesworth showed several snake figures excavated at the pool indicating that the area also housed an Asklepion, a pool dedicated to the healing god Asclepius. It is possible then that the blind, lame and paralysed were not waiting for the God of Israel to heal them, but rather the god Asclepius.[4]

And for the Christian, this then poses the question of whether Jesus purposely went to the pool of Bethesda to confront the pagan healing gods. According to the biblical account, the lame man was healed simply by Christ's words, taking up his bed and walking away without even dipping his toe into the pond and without any stirring up of the water in the pool by some spirit being. This was something well beyond the claims or abilities of either Eshmun or Asclepius to perform. The confluence of biblical narrative and archaeological evidence certainly lend credence to the claims of the writer of the Gospel, that Christ was, indeed, the Son of God. ◆

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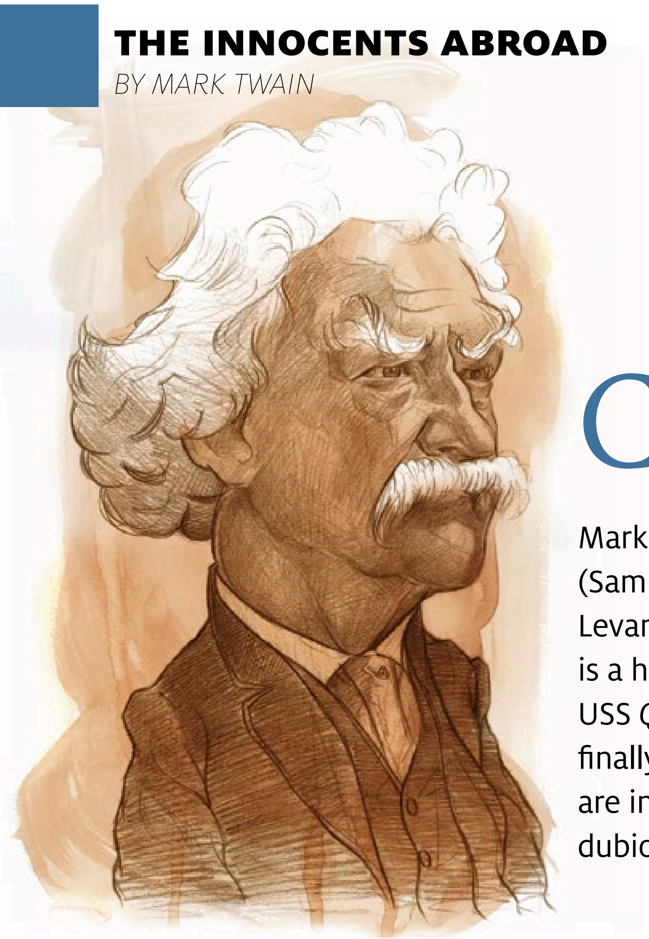
4. www.readingacts.wordpress.com/2010/11/27/two-pools-in-jerusalem-bethesda-and-siloam

BY MARK TWAIN



Part 3

Constantinople

Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* chronicles the author's (Samuel Langhorne Clemens) "Grand Tour" to Europe and the Levant. Originally written as a series of newspaper dispatches, it is a humorous and satirical account. Travelling aboard the steamer USS *Quaker City,* the travellers visited Turkey, the Holy Land and, finally, Egypt. In this issue, the third of our series, the tourists are in Constantinople (now Istanbul), where they experience the dubious delights of the East for the first time.

FROM ATHENS ALL THROUGH THE ISLANDS OF THE Grecian Archipelago, we saw little but forbidding seawalls and barren hills, sometimes surmounted by three or four graceful columns of some ancient temple, lonely and deserted—a fitting symbol of the desolation that has come upon all Greece in these latter ages.

I suppose that ancient Greece and modern Greece compared, furnish the most extravagant contrast to be found in history. George I, an infant of 18, and a scraggy nest of foreign office holders, sit in the places of Themistocles, Pericles, and the illustrious scholars and generals of the Golden Age of Greece. The fleets that were the wonder of the world when the Parthenon was new, are a beggarly handful of fishing-smacks now, and the manly people that performed such miracles of valour at Marathon are only a tribe of unconsidered slaves today. The classic Illyssus has gone dry, and so have all the sources of Grecian wealth and greatness. . . .

We sailed through the barren Archipelago and into the narrow channel they sometimes call the Dardanelles and sometimes the Hellespont. This part of the country is rich in historic reminiscences and poor as Sahara in every thing else. For instance, as we approached the Dardanelles, we coasted along the Plains of Troy and past the mouth of the Scamander; we saw where Troy had stood (in the distance), and where it does not stand now—a city that perished when the world was young. The poor Trojans are all dead, now. They were born too late to see Noah's ark and died too soon to see our menagerie. We saw where Agamemnon's fleets rendezvoused and away inland a mountain which the map said was Mount Ida.

Within the Hellespont we saw where the original first shoddy contract mentioned in history was carried out and the "parties of the second part" gently rebuked by Xerxes. I speak of the famous bridge of boats which Xerxes ordered to be built over the narrowest part of the Hellespont (where it is only two or three miles wide). A moderate gale destroyed the flimsy structure and the King, thinking that to publicly rebuke the contractors might have a good effect on the next set, called them out before the army and had them beheaded. In the next 10 minutes he let a new contract for the bridge. It has been observed by ancient writers that the second bridge was a very good bridge. Xerxes crossed his host of five million men on it and if it had not been purposely destroyed, it would probably have been there yet. In the Hellespont we saw where Leander and Lord Byron swam across, the one to see her upon whom his soul's affections were fixed with a devotion that only death could impair, and the other merely for a flyer, as Jack says. We had two noted tombs near us, too. On one shore slept Ajax and on the other Hecuba.

We had water batteries and forts on both sides of the Hellespont, flying the crimson flag of Turkey, with its white crescent, and occasionally a village, and sometimes a train of camels; we had all these to look at till we entered the broad sea of Marmora. We dropped anchor in the mouth of the Golden Horn at daylight in the morning. Only three or four of us were up to see the great Ottoman capital. The passengers do not turn out at unseasonable hours, as they used to, to get the earliest possible glimpse of strange foreign cities. They are well over that. If we were lying in sight of the Pyramids of Egypt, they would not come on deck until after breakfast nowadays.

The Golden Horn [the site of Constantinople] is a narrow arm of the sea, which branches from the Bosporus (a sort of broad river which connects the Marmora and Black Seas) and, curving around, divides the city in the middle. Galata and

PHOTO: MASTERFILE.COM

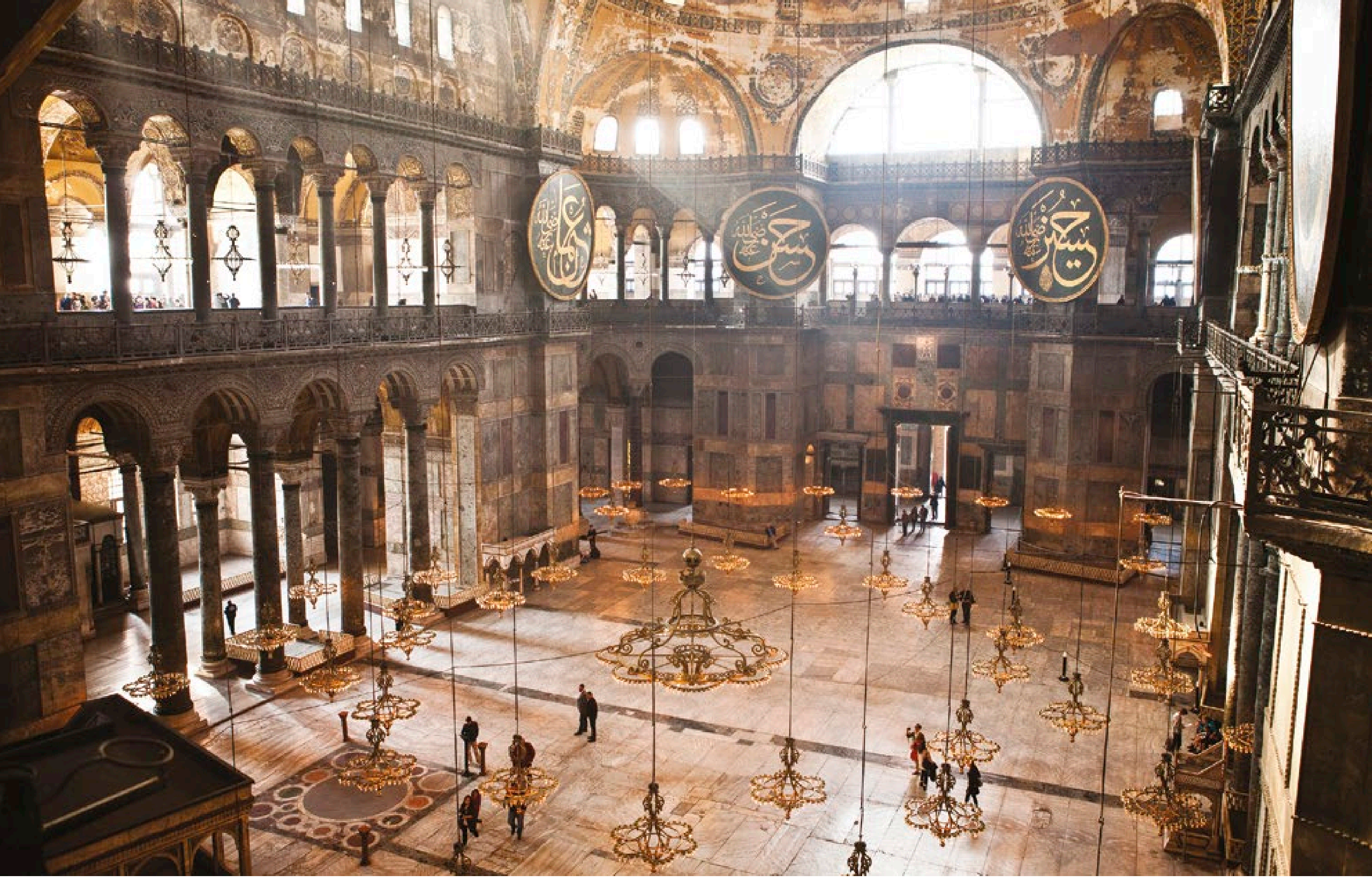
HAGIA SOPHIA, or "St Sophia," originally built as a cathedral in the sixth century A.D., is one of the seven modern wonders of the world. The building has miraculously survived earthquakes, religious conflict and the bombardments of conquering armies. Yet, it failed to impress Mark Twain on his visit. This can partly be attributed to the fact that in 1867, when Twain visited the site, it was used as a Muslim mosque and in accordance with Muslim belief, the beautiful Christian mosaic decorations the site is now famous for were covered with plaster and decorated with patterns in the Muslim style. Today the site has been converted into a museum, with renovations ongoing.

Pera are on one side of the Bosporus, and the Golden Horn; Stamboul (ancient Byzantium) is upon the other. On the other bank of the Bosporus is Scutari and other suburbs of Constantinople. This great city contains a million inhabitants, but so narrow are its streets and so crowded together are its houses, that it does not cover much more than half as much ground as New York City. Seen from the anchorage or from a mile or so up the Bosporus, it is by far the handsomest city we have seen. Its dense array of houses swells upward from the water's edge and spreads over the domes of many hills; and the gardens that peep out here and there, the great globes of the mosques and the countless minarets that meet the eye everywhere, invest the metropolis with the quaint Oriental aspect one dreams of when he reads books of eastern travel. Constantinople makes a noble picture.

But its attractiveness begins and ends with its picturesqueness. From the time one starts ashore till he gets back again, he execrates it. Ashore, it was—well, it was an eternal circus. People were thicker than bees, in those narrow streets, and the men were dressed in all the outrageous, outlandish, idolatrous, extravagant, thunder-and-lightning costumes that ever a tailor with the delirium tremens and seven devils could conceive of. A street in Constantinople is a picture which one ought to see once—not oftener. . . .

The Mosque of St Sophia is the chief lion of Constantinople. You must get a firman and hurry there the first thing. We did that. We did not get a firman, but we took along four or five francs apiece, which is much the same thing. I do not think much of the Mosque of St Sophia. I suppose I lack appreciation. . . . St Sophia is a colossal church, thirteen or fourteen hundred years old, and unsightly enough to be very, very much older. Its immense dome is said to be more wonderful than St Peter's, but its dirt is much more wonderful than its dome, though they never mention it. The church has 170 pillars in it, each a single piece and all of costly marbles of various kinds, but they came from ancient temples at Baalbec, Heliopolis, Athens and Ephesus, and are battered, ugly and repulsive. They were a thousand years old when this church was new, and then the contrast must have been ghastly—if Justinian's architects did not trim them any. The inside of the dome is figured all over with a monstrous inscription in Turkish characters, wrought in gold mosaic, that looks as glaring as a circus bill; the pavements and the marble balustrades are all battered and dirty; the perspective is marred every where by a web of ropes that depend from the dizzy height of the dome, and suspend countless dingy, coarse oil lamps, and ostrich-eggs, six or seven feet above the floor. Squatting and sitting in groups, here and there and far and near, were ragged Turks reading books, hearing sermons, or receiving lessons like children.

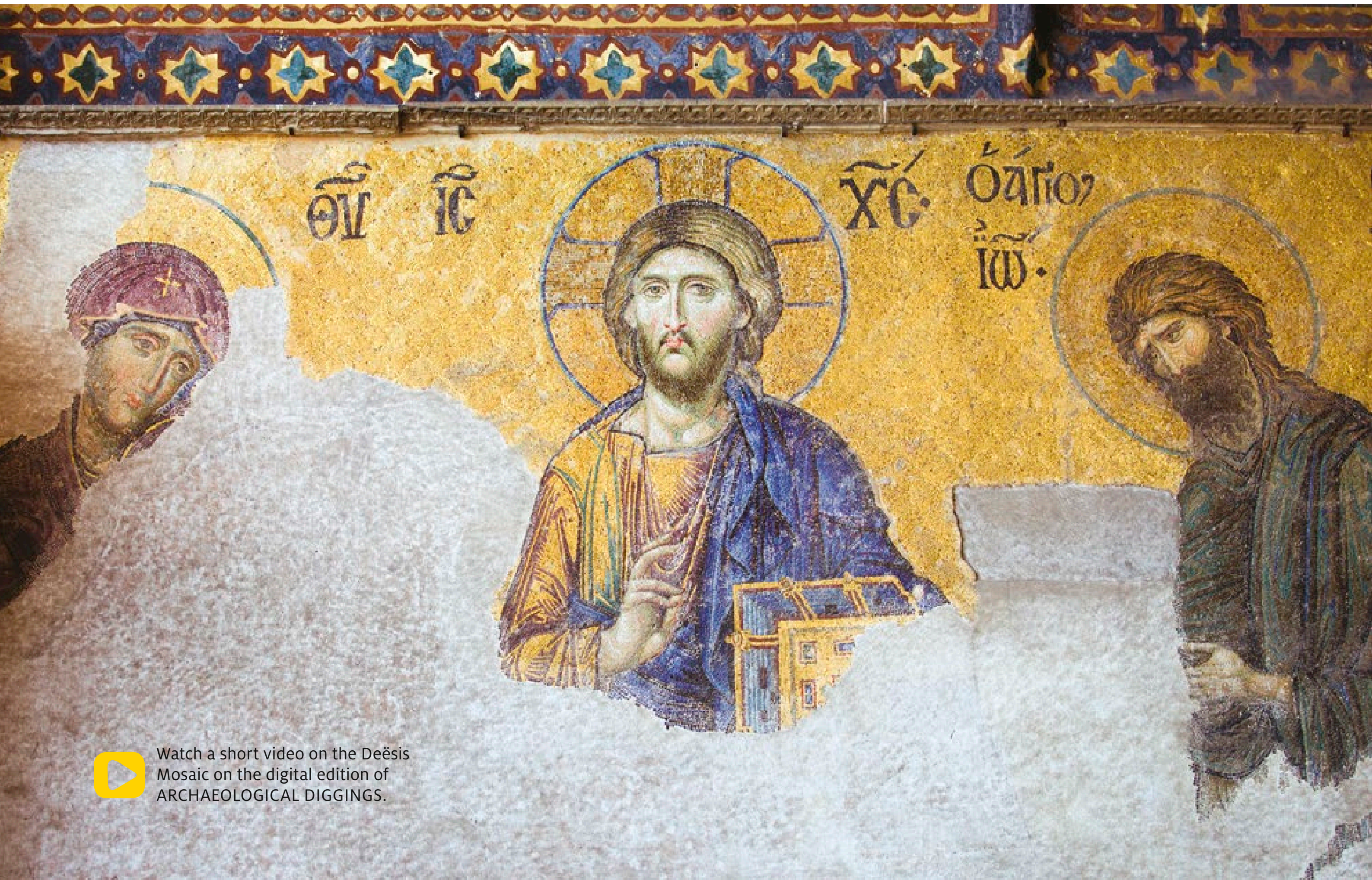
The people who go into ecstasies over St Sophia must surely get them out of the guidebook (where every church is spoken of as being "considered by good judges to be the most marvellous structure, in many respects, that the world



INTERIOR OF THE HAGIA SOPHIA. The crown of the dome rises 55 m (180 ft) above the floor, supported by decorative marble columns taken from ancient buildings, including eight Corinthian columns shipped to Constantinople from Baalbek, in Lebanon, after being disassembled.

THE DEËSIS MOSAIC, widely considered the finest in the Hagia Sophia, was hidden from view beneath a layer of plaster and paint at the time Twain visited. It was not until 1935 that this mosaic was uncovered and immediately hailed as one of the greatest treasures of world art.

PHOTOS: ISTOCKPHOTO | FOTOLIA.COM



Watch a short video on the Deësis Mosaic on the digital edition of ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGGINGS.

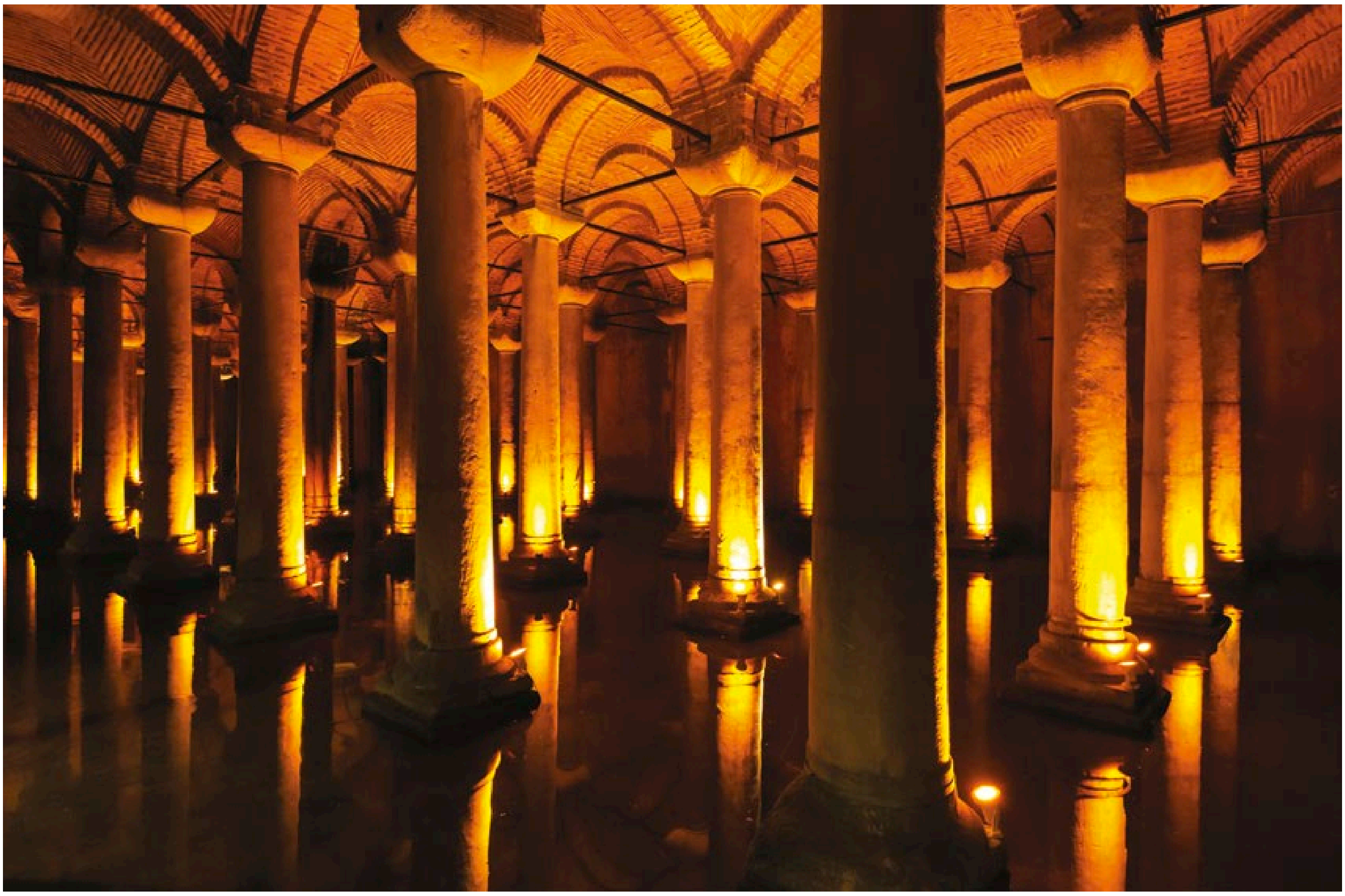


PHOTO: SCALIGER—DREAMSTIME.COM

THE CISTERN OF THE THOUSAND AND ONE COLUMNS, built in the fourth century during the reign of Constantine the Great, had a capacity of some 50,000 cubic metres of water. Despite its exotic name, the true number of columns only number 224, of which 212 still stand.

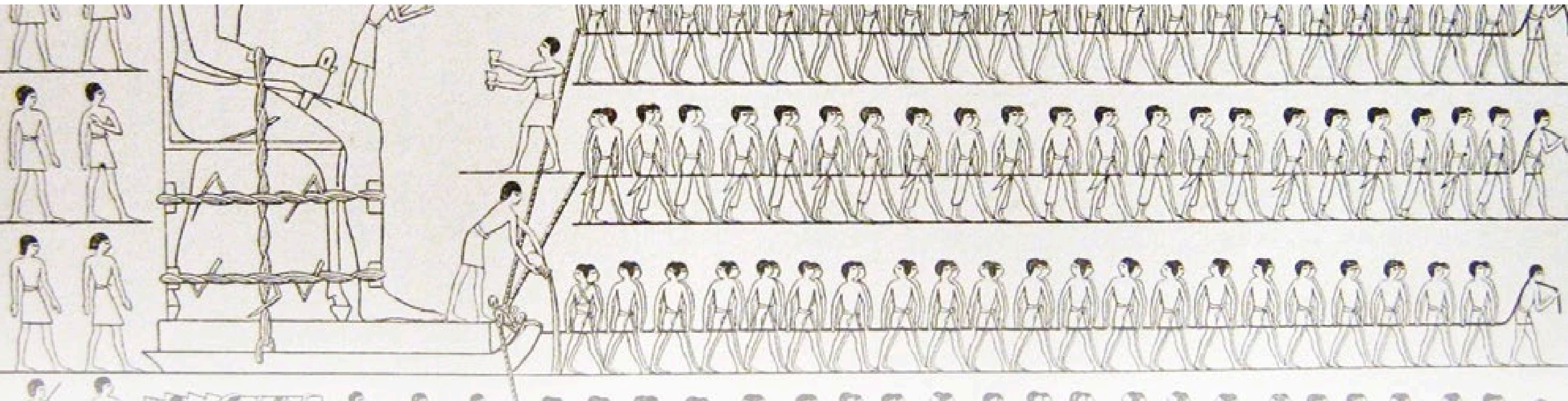
has ever seen"). Or else they are those old connoisseurs from the wilds of New Jersey who laboriously learn the difference between a fresco and a fire-plug and from that day forward feel privileged to void their critical bathos on painting, sculpture and architecture forever more.

We visited the Thousand and One Columns. I do not know what it was originally intended for, but they said it was built for a reservoir. It is situated in the centre of Constantinople. You go down a flight of stone steps in the middle of a barren place and there you are. You are 40 feet under ground, and in the midst of a perfect wilderness of tall, slender, granite columns, of Byzantine architecture. Stand where you would, or change your position as often as you pleased, you were always a centre from which radiated a dozen long archways and colonnades that lost themselves in distance and the sombre twilight of the place. This old dried-up reservoir is occupied by a few ghostly silk-spinners now, and one of them showed me a cross cut high up in one of the pillars. I suppose he meant me to understand that the institution was there before the Turkish occupation and I thought he made a remark to that effect; but he must have had an impediment in his speech, for I did not understand him.

We took off our shoes and went into the marble mausoleum of the Sultan Mahmoud, the neatest piece of architecture, inside that I have seen lately. Mahmoud's tomb was covered with a black velvet pall, which was elaborately embroidered with silver; it stood within a fancy silver railing; at the sides and corners were silver candlesticks that would weigh more than a hundred pounds, and they supported candles as large as a man's leg; on the top of the sarcophagus was a fez, with a handsome diamond ornament upon it, which an attendant said cost a hundred thousand pounds, and lied like a Turk when he said it. Mahmoud's whole family were comfortably planted around him.

We went to the great Bazaar in Stamboul, of course, and I shall not describe it further than to say it is a monstrous hive of little shops—thousands, I should say—all under one roof and cut up into innumerable little blocks by narrow streets which are arched overhead. One street is devoted to a particular kind of merchandise, another to another and so on. When you wish to buy a pair of shoes you have the swing of the whole street—you do not have to walk yourself down hunting stores in different localities. It is the same with silks, antiquities, shawls, etc. . . .

A day or two spent in exhausting marches about the city and voyages up the Golden Horn in caiques, we steamed away again. We passed through the Sea of Marmora and the Dardanelles, and steered for a new land—a new one to us, at least—Asia. We had as yet only acquired a bowing acquaintance with it, through pleasure excursions to Scutari and the regions round about. We passed between Lemnos and Mytilene, and saw them as we had seen Elba and the Balearic Isles—mere bulky shapes, with the softening mists of distance upon them—whales in a fog, as it were. Then we held our course southward and began to "read up" celebrated Smyrna. ◆



How ancient Egyptians moved pyramid stones

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Physicists from the Foundation for Fundamental Research on Matter (FOM) and University of Amsterdam may well have discovered how the ancient Egyptians were able to transport the massive stones used to construct the pyramids across the desert sand to the building site: they probably moistened the sand over which the sledges carrying the massive stones were hauled.

The discovery, based on experimentation and detail found in Egyptian sites, was published online in *Physical Review Letters* (April 29, 2014) and reveals how by wetting the sand just ahead of the sledge with just the right amount of water, they could halve the number of workers needed to move it.

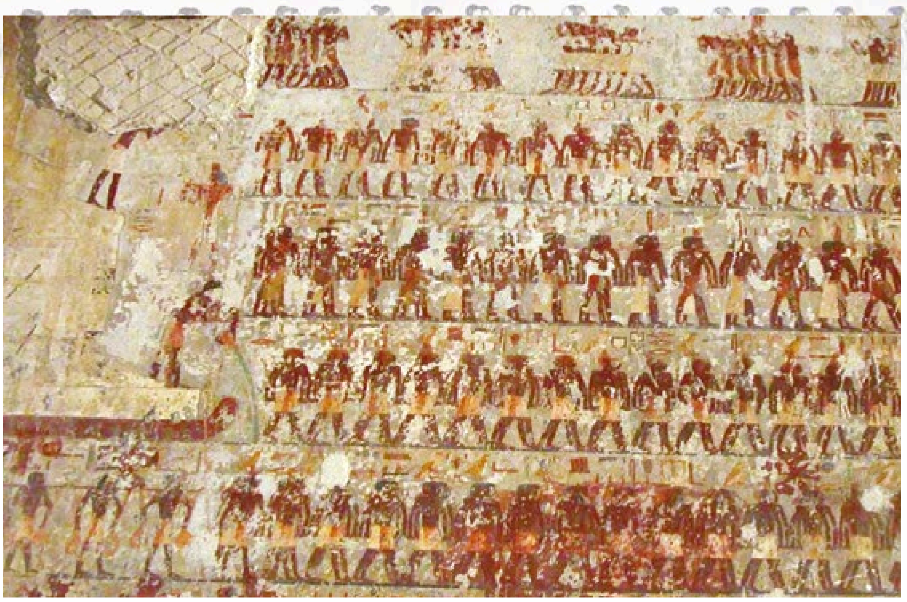
A wall painting in the tomb of Djehutihotep (pictured, top right) clearly shows a person standing on the front of the pulled sledge and pouring water over the sand just in front of it. Experiments show it as highly effective, reducing the energy required by half.

The physicists placed a laboratory model of an Egyptian sledge in a tray of sand. They determined both the required pulling force and the stiffness of the sand as a function of the quantity of water in the sand. To determine the stiffness they used a rheometer, which shows how much force is needed to deform a certain volume of sand.

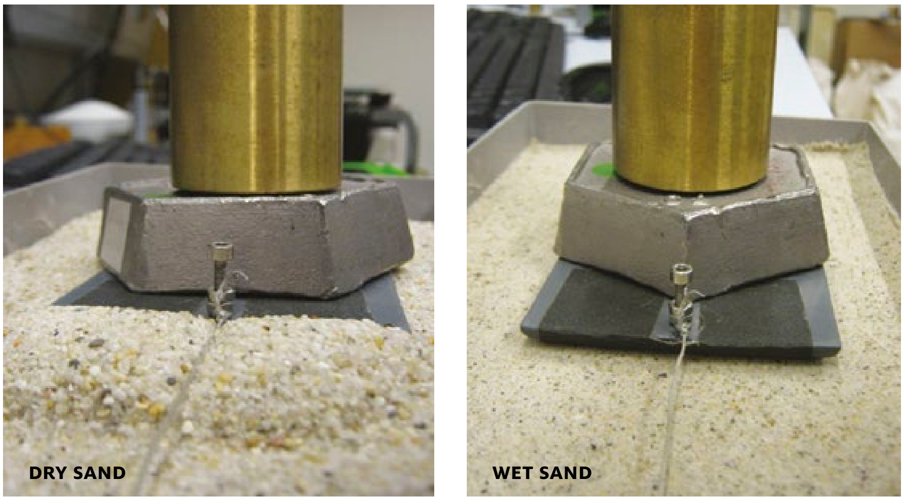
Capillary bridges arise when water is added to the sand. These are small water droplets that bind the sand grains together. In the presence of the correct quantity of water, wet desert sand is about twice as stiff as dry sand, so a sledge glides far more easily over firm desert sand simply because the sand does not pile up.

The research was supervised by FOM group leader professor Daniel Bonn and is part of the FOM program.

—*Ans Hekkenberg, Phys.org, April 30, 2014*



THIS WALL PAINTING in the tomb of Djehutihotep clearly shows a person standing on the front of a pulled sledge and pouring water over the sand just in front of it.



DRY SAND

WET SAND

WET SAND was the key to unlocking the pyramid mystery. A large pile of sand accumulates in front of the sledge when it is pulled across dry sand (left). On wet sand (right), this does not happen, thus requiring far less energy.

Watch the experiment on our digital edition.

PHOTO: FOM INSTITUTE

PHOTO: GARY WEBSTER

AD DEIR, the famous Monastery at Petra, reveals clear connections to the celestial heavens and thus a religious significance long suspected, but not proven.

Petra built for the sun

PETRA, JORDAN

In spite of its majestic and relatively intact temples, burial chambers and homes carved from enduring rock some 2300 years ago, surprisingly little is known about ancient Nabatean life and traditions of Petra, where they lived. Several monuments in Petra and elsewhere built by the Nabateans, display decoration with a preference for astronomical motifs, possibly reflecting their religion. However, with a lack of written accounts and a scarcity of inscriptions, no-one has a clear knowledge of the nature of such beliefs and how they reflected on the calendar or the religious time-keeping system of these people.

But recently, archaeoastronomers Juan Antonio Belmonte and A César González-García, from the Institute of Astrophysics of the Canary Islands, measured the celestial alignments of monuments in Petra and found many align with the setting of the sun during solstices and equinoxes. Their work has demonstrated that the heavens were likely a substantial element of Nabataean religion and revealed new evidence for cultic worship centred on the celestial sphere.

Statistical analysis of the orientation of Nabatean sacred monuments suggests that astronomical orientations were often part of an elaborate plan and possibly even a trace of the astral nature of Nabataean religion. Their findings suggest that the Nabateans purposely built Petra's structures to align or light up during significant celestial phenomena. Belmonte, the study's leader, noted that the effect is particularly stunning at Ad Deir, or The Monastery.

"The lighting is spectacular; the sun setting through the gate perfectly illuminates the sacred areas of the deep interior. . . . Apart from the beauty of the situation itself, the effect, which would have been observable only a week or so before and after the winter solstice, also gives you information about the purpose of the building."

For years archaeologists have debated the exact function of Ad Deir. Is it a tomb? A temple? But according to Belmonte, "With such an alignment, it is now clear that it was certainly a temple with an astral religious character."

—Daisy Carrington, CNN (May 19, 2014); Juan Antonio Belmonte, A César González-García and Andrea Polcaro, Nexus Network Journal *15 (2013), pp 487–501*

PHOTO: BRITISH MUSEUM

WOOLLEY IN ACTION. Archaeologist Leonard Woolley carefully removes earth from a votive figurine discovered during his 1930–1931 excavation of the Royal Cemetery of Ur, in Southern Iraq. Note the long socks, tidily pulled high to his knees, despite his immersion in dirt.

Woolley showcase

LONDON, UK

A collaboration between the British and Penn Museums, made possible with the support of the Leon Levy Foundation, has commenced a project to digitise objects and archives collected during the 1920s and 1930s excavations at Ur, Iraq. A new website will showcase the documented and photographed finds and will be available to the public to enjoy, and includes original excavation photographs, precious artefacts, archives and plans.

Leonard Woolley, one of the lead excavators, placed an emphasis on meticulous recording. As a consequence, his recovered artefacts number into tens of thousands, making the digitisation a long, albeit very important, project.

—Birger Helgestad, British Museum

PHOTO: NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

AMHEIDA EXCAVATIONS. Fragment from Petubastis' temple of Thoth, at Amheida, Egypt. This building sheds light on the Persian occupation of Egypt and the disappear-ance of Cambyses' army in the desert.

Cambyses Lost Patrol

LEIDEN, GERMANY

It is one of the greatest archaeological mysteries of all times: an entire army of 50,000 men disappears in the Egyptian desert around 524 B.C. Now Leiden professor, Olaf Kaper, may have unearthed a cover-up of the affair and solved the riddle.

According to Greek historian Herodotus, the cause of the disappearance of the army was a sandstorm. He tells the story of Persian King Cambyses, who entered the Egyptian desert near Luxor (then Thebes) with an army, never to return, probably swallowed by sand dunes.

But Kaper was not convinced. "Since the nineteenth century, people have been looking for this army: amateurs, as well as professional archaeologists. Some expect to find somewhere under the ground an entire army, fully equipped. However, experience has long shown that you cannot die from a sandstorm, let alone have an entire army disappear."

Kaper argues that the army did not, in fact, disappear, but was simply destroyed. "My research shows that the army was not simply passing through the desert; its final destination was the Dakhla Oasis. This was the location of the troops of the Egyptian rebel leader Petubastis III. He ambushed the army, and in this way managed from his base in the oasis to reconquer a large part of Egypt, after which he had himself crowned Pharaoh in Memphis."

The fact that the fate of the army remained unclear for so long is probably due to the Persian King Darius I, who ended the Egyptian revolt with much bloodshed two years after Cambyses' defeat. Like a modern spin doctor, he attributed the shameful defeat of his predecessor to the elements. Thus 75 years after the events, all Herodotus could do was credit the sandstorm story.

Kaper made his discovery accidentally. While working with the New York University and the University of Lecce, he was involved in excavations in Amheida, in the Dakhla Oasis. There, in early 2014, he was deciphering the full list of titles of Petubastis III etched into ancient temple blocks when, according to Kaper, "the puzzle pieces fell into place."

"Temple blocks indicate [Dakhla] must have been a stronghold at the start of the Persian period. Once we combined this with information we had about Petubastis III, the excavation site and the story of Herodotus, we were able to reconstruct what happened."

—Universiteit Leiden

Statue sells for £16m

NORTHAMPTON, UK

A £16-million sale at auction of an Egyptian statue has caused a stir in the UK. The Northampton Borough Council, had owned the 4000-year-old (2300 B.C.) Sekhemka limestone figure since it was gifted to the town in 1880. It sold for almost £10 million more than the guide price at the auction conducted by Christie's in London.

The 75-cm-tall statue (pictured, right) depicts Sekhemka, "Inspector of Scribes in the House of Largesse, one revered before the Great God," holding a roll of papyrus which lists a number of offerings. Sit-Merit, his wife, sits at his feet.

The sale proceeds will help pay for the extension of the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.

The sale to raise money was seen as unethical by Egypt, archaeologists and the Museums Association, all of which questioned how the museum could abandon its duty to preserve an artefact from its treasured collection. As a result of the sale, the museum could lose its Arts Council England accreditation, which, ironically, would prevent it from receiving government grants and funding.

—Chris Johnston, www.theguardian.com/uk-news, and Nevine El-Aref, weekly.ahram.org

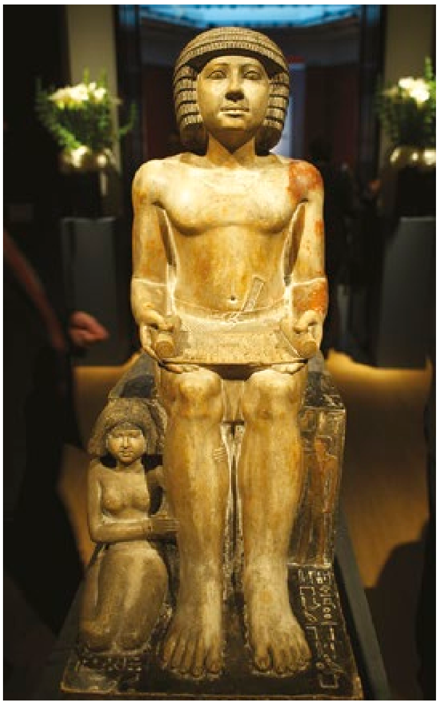
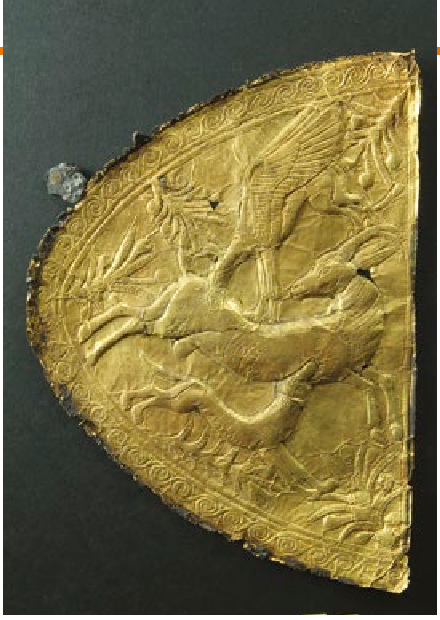


PHOTO: CHRISTIE'S

PHOTOS: RGZM—CHRISTIAN ECKMANN



EGYPTIAN MUSEUM, CAIRO. A technician in the restoration lab works on a gold-leaf decoration (right) of a hunting scene, picturing a dog and a griffin attacking an ibex.

Tutankhamun tomb objects restored

CAIRO, EGYPT

Though Tutankhamun's tomb was discovered in 1922, many of its treasures remain unknown to most people. These include decorated gold leaf-on-leather objects currently undergoing restoration by an Egyptian-German team at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

The artefacts, which are part of Tutankhamun's war chariots and include the trappings of their horses and the sheaths of weapons, have been in bad condition and never given much study. However their decoration is of unusual beauty and decisive historical significance. The combination of Egyptian and Levantine motifs bears witness to the political and cultural interconnections between Egypt and the city-states of the Levant at the time.

A team of restoration specialists and archaeologists from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Mainz—the leading German Institution for scientific restoration—the Institute of Near Eastern Archaeology of the University of Tübingen and the German Archaeological Institute, Cairo, together embarked on a project to carry out a full archaeological and technological analysis of the group of objects and to restore them so that their value and importance might be better appreciated.

With funding by the Federal Republic of Germany, a specialised restoration lab has been set up in the Egyptian Museum. The project is expected to take up to three years and will conclude with a public exhibition of the objects in the Egyptian Museum.

—German Archaeological Institute

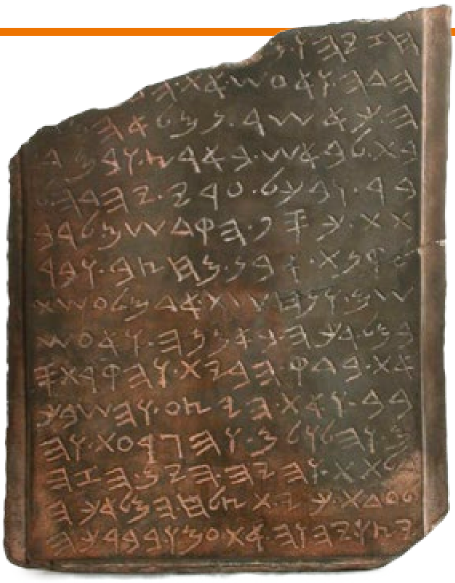
Jehoash Tablet returned

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

An inscribed stone, possibly the only remains of Solomon's Temple, has been returned by Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) to its owner, Oded Golan, after an 11-year legal battle. The Jehoash Tablet was retrieved along with hundreds of other items two years after Golan was acquitted of forging antiquities. He believes it "should go on display, so the public can see it for themselves, together with all the test results carried out before and during the trial."

The tablet is a black stone, 30 cm (12 in) long, 25 cm (10 in) wide and slightly more than 8 cm (3 in) thick. It has 15 lines of ancient Hebrew writing, similar to 2 Kings 12, regarding repairs to the Temple by King Jehoash (c. 800 B.C.).

The IAA now faces a US$2 million lawsuit for wrongful prosecution from Golan's main co-defendant, Tel Aviv antiquities dealer Robert Deutsch, who was acquitted on all charges. In 2012, Golan was also acquitted on all charges of forging this and other antiquities, including a burial box carrying the inscription "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus" (see ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGGINGS, June/July 2014, page 46).



THE JEHOASH TABLET, one of the artefacts the Israel Antiquities Authority accused Oded Golan of forging.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ISRAEL ANTIQUITIES AUTHORITY

The tablet broke in two along an existing crack while in the possession of the IAA and a subsequent examination proved it not a forgery. The bio-organic crust that forms on ancient objects was revealed inside the crack, thus it could not have been of recent construction.

Golan purchased the stone in 1999 from an East Jerusalem dealer, who acquired it in 1997 after it was found in the Muslim cemetery outside the eastern wall of the Old City of Jerusalem, which is next to the Temple Mount.

Scientists at the Geological Survey of Israel found no indication of forgery. Rather, they found thousands of sub-microscopic globules of gold embedded in the bio-organic crust, as if the tablet had been close to an inferno in which golden objects had melted and diffused into tiny droplets. Carbon-14 dating of the bio-organic crust revealed it was approximately 2200 years old. They found no "petrographic or chemical evidence that the crust was artificially added to the stone" and proposed "the hypothesis that the tablet is a royal inscription that was placed in Jerusalem at the time of King Jehoash."

—Matthew Kalman, Haaretz

Nero's revolving restaurant

ROME, ITALY

Archaeological excavations by a French and Italian team, led by Francois Villedieu, have reopened on the northeast corner of Rome's Palatine Hill. In 2009, they discovered what is believed to have been one of the most sophisticated structures of antiquity, a revolving dining room built by the Emperor Nero. They initially discovered part of a round, 12-m (40 ft) tower, with a massive central pillar four metres (13 ft) in diameter, and eight pairs of arches supporting two floors. The strata it occupied and the building technique date the tower to Emperor Nero's time. However, whatever it was built to support had been razed after Nero's death to make way for a new palace.

The discovery of semi-spherical holes filled with slippery clay along the top of the upper arches reminded archaeologists of cavities filled with similar lubricants used on large ships and harbour structures to contain primitive ball bearings, on which moveable platforms were mounted to transport heavy loads. But why was such equipment in part of Nero's *Domus Aurea* ("Golden House") palace?

Researchers recalled the Roman historian Suetonius' description of the infamous emperor's palace. As Suetonius recorded it, the "main dining room was round and revolved continuously on itself, day and night, like the world." Historians had thought Suetonius had exaggerated his description and that the coenatio rotunda was the round, frescoed hall located in another part of the immense palace, on the opposite Esquiline Hill.

However, the discovery by Villedieu's team of the mysterious cavities in the structure led to the belief that they housed metal spheres that supported a revolving floor.

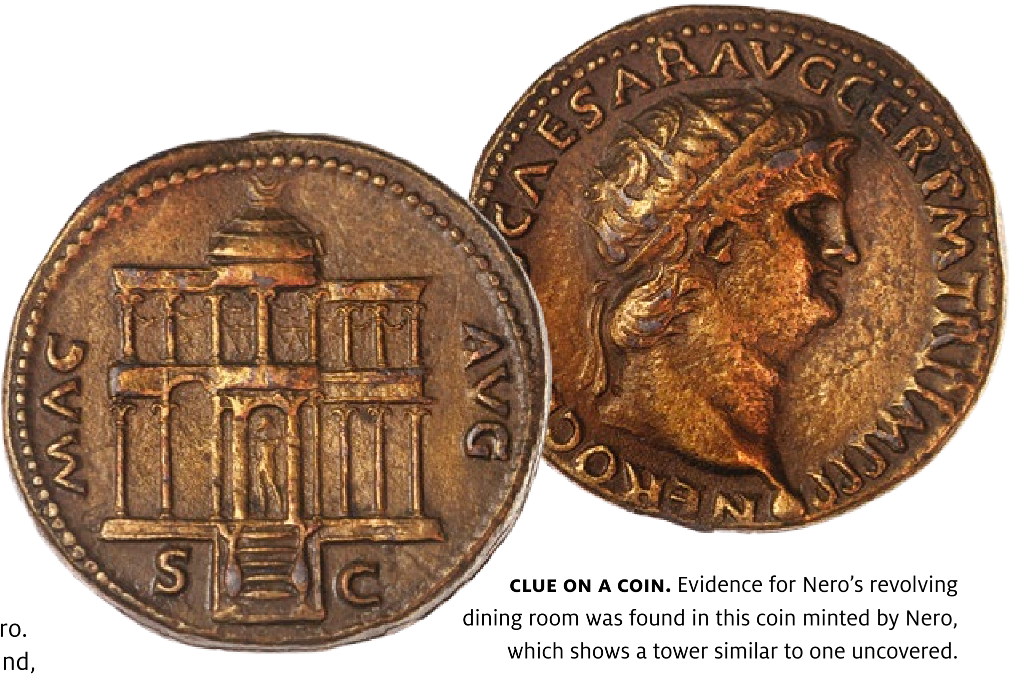
At the base of the tower were indications that a mechanism had been built into the wall. While the metal parts had been removed, calcite deposits on the surrounding stones suggest the floor's constant movement may have been powered by water channelled through a system of gears.

Further evidence was found in a coin minted by Nero, which shows a tower similar to the one uncovered, with two smaller structures on the side, and the Sibylline inscription *MAC AUG*. While "Aug" refers to Augustus, the title all caesars took, some scholars believe "Mac" refers to the *macellum* or "market" of Augustus, while others, including Villedieu, believe the coin's tall and narrow building is not a market and should be read as an abbreviation of *machina,* or the "machine of Augustus."

"We don't have definitive proof, but we have many convincing clues," Villedieu said.

Maria Tomei, an archaeologist and former official for the Italian Culture Ministry's Archaeological Superintendency, which supervises the dig on the Palatine, believes that while Nero has a terrible reputation, the mechanical and architectural sophistication of his revolving dining room highlight his passion for science and technology as well as for the arts and culture.

—Ariel David, Haaretz



CLUE ON A COIN. Evidence for Nero's revolving dining room was found in this coin minted by Nero, which shows a tower similar to one uncovered.

PHOTO: PJRSTUDIO—ALAMY

Transition zone

COLORADO, USA

A 1500-year-old permanently inhabited Native American settlement has been found in the Mesa Verde region of Colorado.

"This is the first population to move into the central Mesa Verde region and farm and be sedentary full time," said Susan Ryan, director of archaeology at the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center.

While young by European and Middle Eastern standards, for the Four Corners region, the 10 pit houses and central ceremonial chamber appear to be the first settlement for a people transitioning into a new, agricultural life and is therefore of great importance to understanding the pre-history period of the inhabitants.

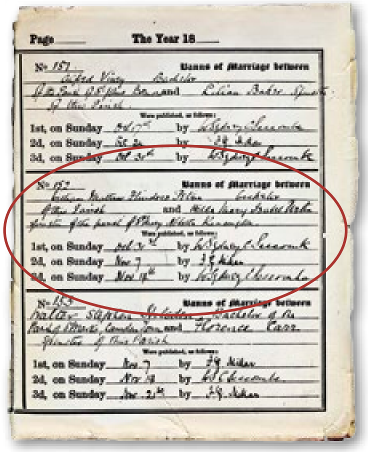
—Western Digs

FLOOR OF A PITHOUSE on the Dillard site, with storage bins and artefacts *in situ*.

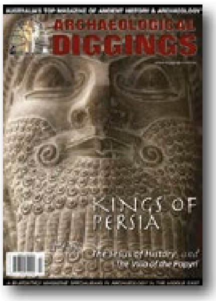
PHOTO: ROW CANYON ARCHAEOLOGICAL CENTER

The Agora

Public noticeboard of items of interest and readers' comments



Corrections In the biography of Sir William Flinders Petrie ("The Archaeologist," June/July 2014, p 56), the year of his marriage to Hilda Mary Isabel Urlin at Hampstead Christ Church, Hampstead, was stated as November 1896. In fact it was 1897. The accompanying notice of banns was supplied by a reader. Also, Petrie's daughter was named Ann, rather than Anne, according to birth, death and census data.



Reprint: Diggings issue 2013 No 4

A limited number of a reprinted ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGGINGS issue 2013 No 4 are available. If you missed this issue—and many of you did—write to us including your daytime phone number to editor@diggings.com.au or phone +61 2 9847 2222. These are available for A$5.50 *plus* post.

US Readers For those non-subscription readers in the US wondering where ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGGINGS disappeared to for the past few months, we experienced an unfortunate disruption to our US supply chain when the US distributor was forced into bankruptcy. The consignment of DIGGINGS on the high seas at the time was diverted to our Canadian distributor, which did its best to tranship them. A second further issue was then delayed, awaiting the appointment of a new distributor. We can only apologise and suggest you take out a subscription (see page 13).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGGINGS Tours 2014 This year's tours leave on August 24, and September 21 and 28. For an update of progress, traveller photos and comments, go to the DIGGINGS website, www.diggings.com/tour.

Mail We receive reader feedback via letter and email from time to time. We wish to make this a regular feature of the new-look DIGGINGS. Please write to us—both brickbats and cudos are welcome.

Database update Our new subscription system is now operational, after some months of difficulty and stop-gap arrangements. The new system is subscriber self-managed, which means you can access your profile details, making changes to your delivery address, for example, and renew your subscription online.

All subscribers will shortly receive a letter by post outlining the changes and asking you to confirm your details and tell us how you wish to receive future communications. Subscribers will be given the default option of receiving notifications in the traditional manner, by post.

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Coffs Harbour, NSW

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School groups by appointment.

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Brisbane, Qld **The Diggings Club** meets on the second Sunday of each month at 1 pm in the Central City Library, 266 George Street, Brisbane. For further information, phone Veronica Mason on (07) 3219 3097.

Sydney, NSW **Macquarie University** holds regular seminars and one-off events on ancient world studies. For more information, run an internet search of "Macquarie University ancient world history seminar."

Gold Coast, Qld **The Pharos Club** meets in Southport on the first Saturday of each month at 1 pm. For more information, please contact Maureen Hughes on (07) 5531 1394.

Adelaide, SA **The Ancient Egypt Study Group** meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7.30 pm in Clarence Gardens, Adelaide. **The Hieroglyphs Study Group** meets on the third Tuesday of each month. For further details, please phone (08) 8276 7945.

Contact us If you have a news item to report, an upcoming event, a seminar or a regular meeting that you wish to publicise, write to: The Editor, Locked Bag 1115, Wahroonga NSW 2076, Australia, or email editor@diggings.com.au

Note, all such inclusions are at the discretion of the editor.

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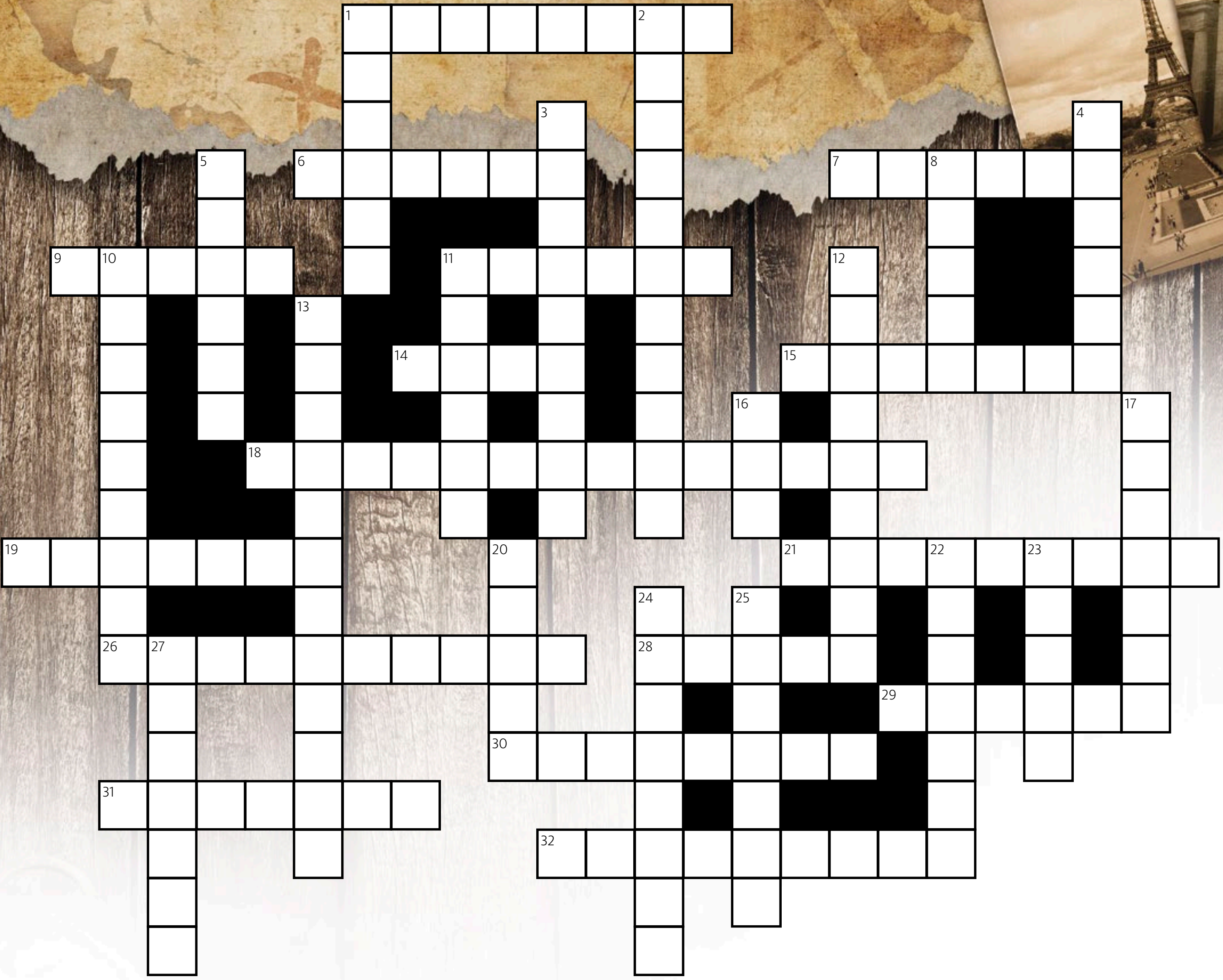

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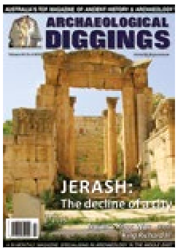
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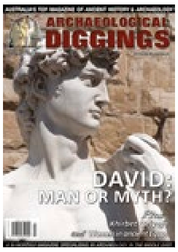
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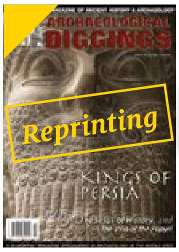
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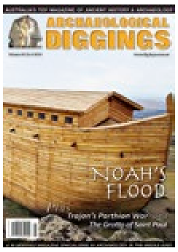
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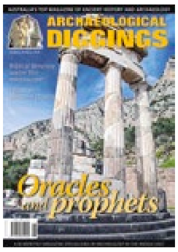
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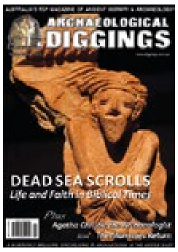
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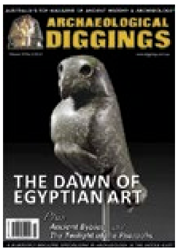
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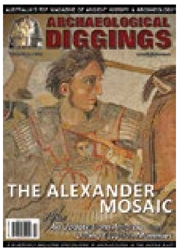
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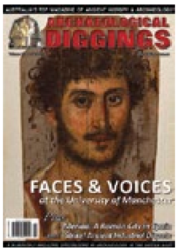
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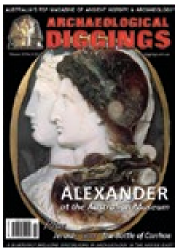
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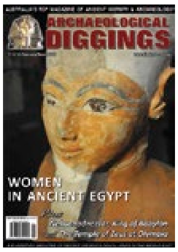
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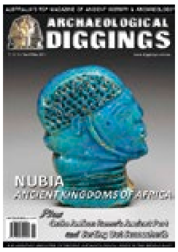
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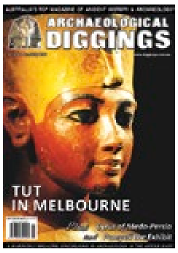
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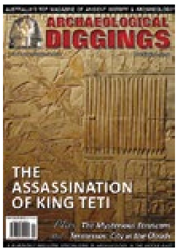
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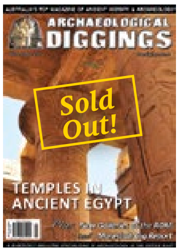
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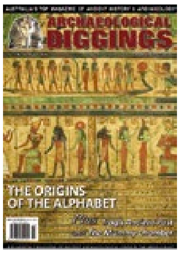
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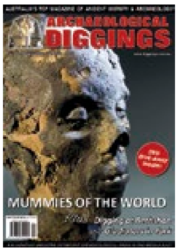
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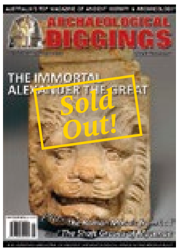
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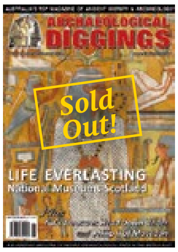
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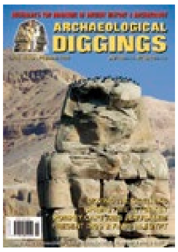
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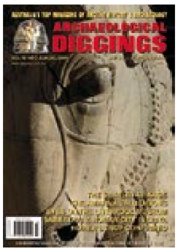
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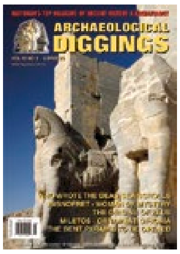
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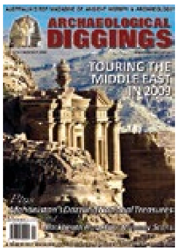
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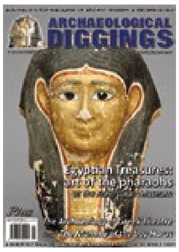
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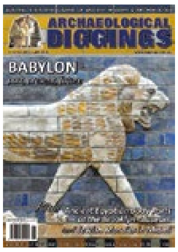
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